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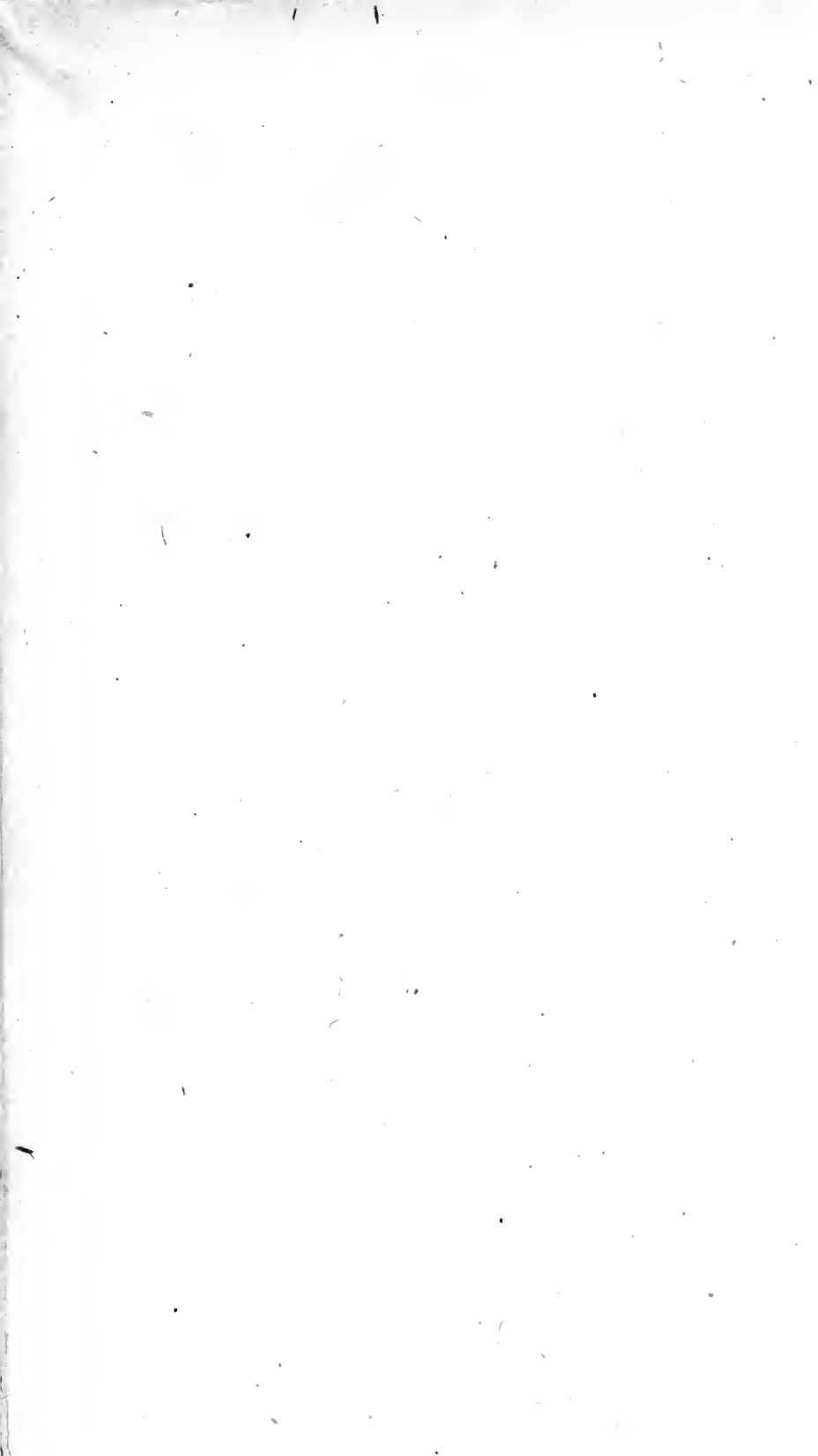
THE TAR FOR ALL WEATHERS.

Todd, Justin
BY HARRY HAZEL.

AUTHOR OF "OLD PUT; OR THE DAYS OF 1776," "THE BRIGAND, OR THE MOUNTAIN CHIEF," "THE FLYING ARTILLERIST," "YANKEE JACK," "THE REBEL AND THE ROVER," "THE THREE PIRATES, OR THE CRUISE OF THE TORNADO," "GALLANT TOM," "RED KING, OR THE CORSAIR CHIEFTAIN," "SYLVIA SEABURY, OR THE YANKEES IN JAPAN," "THE FLYING DUTCHMAN," "THE DOOMED SHIP," "GALLOPING GUS," "HARRY HELM," "YANKEE MIDDY," "SWEENEY TODD," "THE GOLD SEEKERS," "RALPH RUNNION," "VALDEZ, THE PIRATE," "KING'S CRUISERS," "THE REBEL BRIDE," "HARRY TEMPEST," "THE FLYING YANKEE," "THE PIRATE'S SON," ETC., ETC.

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JACK JUNK:

OR,

THE TAR FOR ALL WEATHERS.

CHAPTER I.

The First of May—The old Tar's Tale—The Ship on Fire—The Lovers—Jack and his Rival—The Fete—The Interruption.

It was the first of May, and a more bright and lovely first of May never gladdened the children of the earth. The sky was brilliantly clear, the atmosphere was light and refreshing, and a delightful breeze springing up, counteracting the scorching heat of the sun's rays. The scene at which our tale commences was in the vicinity of a sea-port town, and although it was very early, everything gave token of some approaching festivity. The church-bells were ringing forth their merriest peals, and from the mast-heads of the different vessels lying at anchor, the gay streamers waved playfully in the wind. In the centre of a green lawn, and immediately before a quaint old tavern, whose walls were thickly mantled with ivy, the May-pole reared its gay head, and gave cheerful omen of the happy sports to which the day was dedicated. The whole of the establishment at "The Ship" were pressed into active service, and Kit Breezely, the landlord, urged his servants on to increased industry, whistled, and sang, and laughed by turns, in a state of the highest glee and expectation. While Kit and his servants were thus occupied, they were interrupted by a loud shout of "Ship a-hoy!" uttered in the voice of a Stentor.

"That's old Joe Trennant, for a wager," said Kit, looking around him. "I could tell his voice from a thousand."

"Ship a-hoy!—Kit Breezely a-hoy!" again shouted the same distinct voice. "Damme! where's the skipper! Have ye all deserted the ship?"

'My name is Tom Tough,
I have seen a little sarvice,
Where the mighty billows——'

"Ah! Kit, my old sea-gull, give us your fin, and then we'll splice the main brace together; and mind it is not three water grog, or shiver my timbers I'll toss you overboard in less time than you could cry 'peccavi.'"

"Ah! Joe, my old friend, welcome—welcome to the old Ship on this glorious May morning," said Kit. "I thought that you would be my first guest this morning, as you are usually my last at night."

"Ay, Master Breezely," replied Joe, "I wouldn't give the value of a biscuit for a fellow who thinks of sneaking to his hammock till he is quite seas over."

"And you just be so good as to belay your palaver, and bring the grog I ordered, you son of an old shark."

"You shall have it in a moment, Joe," said Kit, "for I never like to keep my customers waiting."

With these words Kit Breezely departed, and left old Joe Trennant singing the burthen of a sea song in tones far more powerful than musical. Joe Trennant was a fine specimen of an old naval veteran, with thin silvery hair, a rubicund visage, and features profusely decorated with grog blossoms. The loss of one eye, one leg, and one arm—an iron hook substituted for his hand, showed that he had suffered much in the service of his country, and bore ample evidence of the authenticity of the numerous tough yarns he was accustomed to spin when surrounded by his old companions. A merrier fellow than Joe Trennant did not exist, or one that was more respected for the generosity, benevolence, and honesty of his character. Kit soon returned with the grog, and he and Joe, having seated themselves on a bench outside the tavern, pledged each other in bumpers with hearty good will.

"We shall have a merry day of it, Kit, I'll be bound," said Joe; "I long for the sports to begin. Fill your glass, my old buck, and

here's to the health and happiness of our May-queen, the pretty Kate Markham!"

"Ay, I will drink that toast with all my heart," said Kit, "for the land cannot boast of a prettier or more virtuous girl than Kate Markham, the admiration of all who know her, and the pride and comfort of her uncle, under whose protection she has been ever since she had the misfortune to be deprived of her parents."

"Yes, Kit," said Joe, "Kate Markham is a craft that any man might be proud of, and he will be a happy fellow who is destined to become her commander."

"And if I am not much mistaken, that will be no other than our young friend, Jack Junk, one of the trimmest and bravest lads in the navy."

"You may well say that, Kit, and no one admires the boy more than I do, and you know I have known him since his earliest childhood. Here's to the health of Jack Junk, the pride of the good and gallant ship Defiance, and may he live some day to become an admiral."

"Bravo, Joe," responded his companion; "here's to the health of Jack Junk, the tar for all weathers, and may he live to be some day an admiral."

"The tar for all weathers," repeated Joe, "ah, you may well say that; fear is a stranger to him, dauntless in the raging storm, bold as a lion in the battle's heat, and merry as a grig at all times; in fact, for singing, laughing, dancing, or fighting, find me another that can match him. Why, bless you, he was born a sailor, he took to salt water when not half a handspike high, as nat'ral as his mother's breast. Kate Markham and he love each other, and I trust that the day is not far distant when they will be happily spliced."

"But Jack has a rival, you know."

"What, that lubber, Mark Stanford?" said Joe. "Bah!—he has a pretty good stock of impudence to dare raise his thoughts towards her; but Kate, I am certain, hates him, and her uncle will give no encouragement to his addresses—so Jack Junk has nothing to fear from him."

"I do not half like that fellow, Farmer Stanford, as he is commonly called," remarked Kit; "there is something in the expression of his countenance and his manners that convinces me he is a villain

at heart. He first took up his residence in this neighborhood, you know, about five years ago, and no one knew where he came from; and he has been absent, at different periods during that time, for months together, and no one could discover whither he had gone, but he always returned as suddenly as he departed: this looks very mysterious and suspicious, in my opinion, to say the least of it."

"Ay, ay," replied Joe; "however, it will not do for him to try any of his tricks here, or he will find himself mistaken, I'll warrant. But let us have some more grog aboard, for I'm determined to be merry to-day, if I never am again in my life. Our friends will soon be here, no doubt, and then, hey for the dance round the Maypole! I'll have a dance round it myself, if I break my old wooden pin in the job!"

"Ha!—ha!—ha!" laughed Kit Breezely, and he then made his exit into the house, in order to bring a fresh supply of grog.

"You have often promised me, Joe," said Kit, on returning and taking his seat, "that you would give me the particulars of the history of our young friend Jack, and I confess I feel a great curiosity to hear it. He is not the son of the late old Jack Junk, whose name he has adopted?"

"Lord love ye, no," answered Joe Trennant, "nor any relation to him. My Jack, as I call him—for he always takes up his quarters with me, whenever he is ashore, since the death of his adopted father—never knew his parents, and it's a great chance if he ever will do so now."

"No!"

"No: but I will tell you all about it. You see, old Jack Junk and I had long been messmates, and we were sworn friends. It is now about twenty-one years ago, that, when homeward-bound from the coast of Guinea, in the gallant ship *Alligator*, seventy-four, Captain Summers, commander, (as brave an officer as ever trod the quarter-deck,) and for some days we encountered very rough weather, strong gales from N. N. E., latitude and longitude I forget; but at length the wind went down, the weather became more calm, and our vessel made good way on her voyage. It was the mid-watch, when the man on board suddenly shouted, 'Ship on fire ahead!' All hands immediately hurried on deck, and there, sure enough, we beheld the unfortunate vessel at no great distance ahead of us, enveloped in flames from stem to stern, and we could distinctly

hear the shrieks of horror and despair of the poor creatures on board. Destruction seemed inevitable, but we lost no time in rendering all the assistance in our power; boats were launched, and myself, Jack Junk, and several more of the crew, put off in them to the burning vessel, with the hope of being enabled to save, at any rate, some of the unfortunate creatures. As we approached nearer, the cries for help became more distinct and terrific, and we could plainly see many of them running about in the midst of the flames in the most frantic state; whilst others leaped overboard, but only to meet with a watery grave. But the fatal moment now arrived; there was a terrific crash; the flames had reached the powder magazine, and every timber of the ill fated vessel, with all the poor souls on board, were hurled high in the air—and the work of destruction was complete.”

“Awful!” said Kit; “but did they all perish?”

“All, with the exception of an infant, whom, with its mother, Jack and myself were fortunate enough to pick up, just at the moment when they were about to sink forever. The unfortunate mother was quite dead, but the infant lived. It was a boy—and need I tell you that that boy is our favorite, the noble-hearted Jack Junk, who has gone by that name ever since? On arriving in England, Jack took the infant home, and placed it under the care of his wife, and from that time till the day of their death, I need not tell you that they brought him up with the same care and affection as if he had been their own son.”

“But was the name of the ill-fated ship never known?” inquired Kit.

“Why,” answered Joe Trennant, “it was supposed to be the Mary, merchantman, bound for Liverpool; but that was only a matter of conjecture, as nothing was saved from her which could remove all doubt. The clothes of the mother and her infant were of the finest quality, which showed, at any rate, their connections were respectable; but there is not the least probability of the mystery ever being solved; though, for the sake of young Jack, I heartily wish it was. But see—some of our friends approach this way!—and after this dismal story, it is needful that we should take some refreshment, just to put us in spirits for the pleasures of the day.”

“With all my heart,” said Kit, and several of the guests then joined them. They gave them a hearty welcome, and retired into

the house. They had scarcely disappeared, when a man turned round an abrupt angle of the building, and, advancing towards the Maypole, he paused, and, folding his arms, contemplated it with a sinister expression of countenance. This was Mark Stanford, the supposed farmer, of whom Kit Breezely and Joe Trennant had spoken in such disparaging terms ; and certainly his personal appearance fully corresponded with the portrait they had drawn of him. He was a man apparently between forty and fifty years of age, tall, and of muscular proportions. His features were large and irregular, and his eye dark and scowling. He was habited as a farmer, but the character seemed but ill to become him ; and it required no deep penetration to perceive that it was only assumed to carry out some deep-laid design.

"So," he said, after a pause, "this is the spot chosen for the festivity—and the lovely Kate Markham, who has so scornfully rejected my addresses in favor of Jack Junk, the seaman, is to be the queen of the day. I will be present at the sports, never fear, though I know that I shall be most unwelcome, and once more feast my eyes on her charms. She scorns me—she despises me—she hates me, I know ; but I care not ; the time shall yet come when she shall learn to feel and tremble at my power. The fools in this neighborhood little suspect who the supposed farmer, Mark Stanford, as I have chosen to call myself, really is, and I can therefore work out my designs in greater security. What would be the horror of Kate Markham, did she but know that in me she beholds the murderer of her father, whom she supposes to have died a natural death at sea ! I cannot marvel at the instinctive hatred she bears towards me. But silence, Mark!—you must be more guarded in your speech, lest you should be overheard by some one, in which case your destruction would be inevitable. Let me to my home, and prepare myself to join the rustic festival, and to appear to enter into all the amusements with an hilarity and spirit equal to the rest."

Thus saying, Mark Stanford hurried on his way, and was soon out of sight.

"This is one of the happiest moments of my life," observed old Joe, "and if I do not enjoy myself, may I never taste grog again ! My lads, here's to every one's good health. Sweethearts and wives, old and young, gentle and simple ; old Joe Trennant does like every-

body to be happy. But I wish my young friend, Jack Junk, was here."

"Oh, he will soon arrive, never fear, returned Ki Breezely "I suppose he is only dallying a little while with his sweetheart Kate, which is very natural, you know."

"To be sure it is," coincided Joe; "oh, I cannot help picturing to myself how beautiful she will look, to be sure, as our May-Queen."

"Kate Markham must look beautiful in any character," observed Kit.

"The wind that blows, the ship that goes.
And the lass that loves a sailor."

"There he is, the young sea-lion!" said Joe Trennant. "That's Jack Junk, the pride of the Defiance, and the darling of the crew! Hurrah!—Jack Junk, a-hoy!"

"Joe Trennant a-hoy!" shouted our hero, in high glee, and immediately afterwards he entered the room, and was received with as much enthusiasm and cordiality by all present as if he had been the admiral of the fleet.

And a fine, handsome-looking young man was Joe Junk, the hero of our tale; there was grace and activity in every limb, and the very spirit of honor, generosity, and good humor was enshrined upon his manly brow. His fine black eyes sparkled with vivacity and intelligence and his hair hung in glossy ringlets down to his shoulders. The neatness of his dress added to the interest of his appearance; and, altogether, he was a person who, the moment he was seen, could not fail to rivet respect and admiration.

"Thanks, my friends, for this kind reception. I greet ye all," he said, "but I cannot stay long with you at present; I am afraid my dear Kate will have expected me long ere this."

Jack, having shaken them all by the hand, took his departure on his joyous errand.

The sounds of approaching music and shouts of joy soon saluted their ears, and old Joe started up with the utmost hilarity, and exclaimed—

"Splice my timbers! here they come, full sail. Weigh anchor, my lads, spread every stitch of canvas, and let us away to welcome them."

The guests needed no second invitation, but all of them issued

from the house, and the next moment they beheld the rustic procession approaching the scene of festivity to the simple music of the pipe and tabor. First came six young rustic maidens, clad in white, strewing the path with flowers, as they advanced ; and then, beneath a canopy of flowers, borne by six youthful mariners, and supported by her lover, appeared the lovely queen of the festivities, the innocent and fascinating Kate Markham, attired in a robe of white, decorated with roses, and a tiara of May flowers encircling her fair and expressive forehead. The remainder of the procession was formed of the persons who intended to take part in the festivities, young and old, all attired in their holiday gear. Nothing could exceed the beauty of the scene. But how shall we describe the dazzling charms of Kate Markham ? so young and innocent ; so modest and retiring ; so smiling and so happy. She was not yet eighteen, and to all the artless playfulness of the girl, was united the calm grace and dignity of the woman. Her features were exquisitely modelled, and her form was symmetry itself—so light, so airy, and so graceful, that the mind was lost in admiration wherever she appeared. Not one thought that angels need blush to acknowledge had ever entered her breast ; and she was as intrinsically pure as her person was lovely. No wonder that Jack Junk felt himself the proudest and happiest of individuals in existence. He would have laid down his life to serve her—would have punished any one who should have dared to insult her.—How his heart palpitated with delight as he was thus seated by her side, and beheld her the theme of universal esteem and admiration !

In the midst of the revelry, Mark Stanford, accompanied by another man, as repulsive in aspect as himself, made their appearance upon the lawn, and standing at a corner of the Old Ship Tavern, where they were not likely to be immediately observed, they, for a while, contemplated in silence the joyous sports that were proceeding.

"She is here, Pierce," at length said Mark Stanford, pointing in the direction Kate and her lover were tripping in the dance ; "is she not very beautiful ? is she not a being who might move even a stoic's heart to rapture and to admiration ?"

"True, true," replied Pierce, "and a rare mate she would be for the Pirate Chief, if he could only gain possession of her."

"Hush!" said Mark, looking cautiously around. "Farmer Stanford, mind you, when I am abroad."

"True, true, *Farmer* Stanford," replied Pierce, with a half smile and a wink of the eye: "but," he added, in an undertone, "enter-taining the sentiments you do towards the lass, methinks it must be rather vexatious to you to witness the favor she bestows upon the young sailor, Jack Junk, whom she is now dancing with. I would sacrifice all that I possess to enjoy the felicity he is now experiencing."

"Hold! hold! Pierce," said Stanford, impatiently, "your words set my brain on fire, and I shall forget myself. The time will come when I will spoil the sports of that stripling, Jack, and he shall know me in my true character. But at present it is only policy to do the amiable. Do you understand me?"

"Oh yes," answered his companion.

"Pierce," resumed Mark Stanford, after a brief pause, "what would be the feelings of that now happy damsel, whose joyous smiles impart such pleasure to all here assembled, did she but know the real fate of her father; were she aware that his murderer was so near her?"

"His murderer?"

"Ay, it is even so; you have often heard me allude to that subject, but knowing that I can at least confide in you, I will relate to you all the particulars. Her father, Horace Markham, as good a seaman as ever trod deck, died by fever, at sea—ha! ha! His wife was my foster-sister. I loved her; she rejected me for him; I thirsted for revenge, but concealed my thoughts and deceived them. Years flew by; fortune smiled upon me while it frowned upon Horace Markham. I became the master and captain of a merchant vessel—Horace, one of my crew, performing several voyages with me, in which I affected to show him all kindness and friendship, but at the same time only watching an opportunity to gratify my revenge. My passion for his wife had given place to a feeling of inveterate hatred, but I viewed the growing charms of her youthful daughter with the warmest admiration, and at the same time with a firm determination that at one time or other she should be mine."

"Then, of course, Kate Markham, in her more youthful days, knew you well?" said Pierce.

"Yes," replied Stanford.

"And how long is it since the death of her father?" inquired his companion.

"About seven years. Her mother has been dead about five, and since that time she has been under the protection of her uncle."

"Did he ever see you?"

"Not till I came here in my present character."

At this moment, Diggory Knobbs, the parish beadle, advanced and said—

"I have the extreme felicity and distinguished honor of welcoming you to our rustic festival on this glorious first of May. Allow me to introduce you and your friend to the august presence of our May Queen. She is a rare specimen of nature's handiwork; it is a pity she should throw herself away on a common sailor like Jack Junk, when she is worthy of becoming the wife even of a beadle. I believe, Mr. Stanford, that Kate Markham has made some impression upon your heart, and that you made overtures for her hand, but was rejected."

Mark Stanford nodded assent, and the beadle proceeded—

"Well, well—I pity her want of taste; but young girls have strange notions, of which they may be cured in time. For my part, I promise you all the influence I possess over Kate, for I don't mind telling you in confidence that I detest that upstart boy, Jack Junk, as he is called."

"Indeed!" said Stanford.

"Yes," answered the beadle; "he has never paid proper respect to my person and the high office I hold."

"Monstrous!" exclaimed Stanford and his companion, with mock astonishment and indignation.

"'Tis true, I assure you, on the honor of a parish beadle; but—ah! whom have we here? Old Reuben, the wise man, looking as dismal and as ominous as usual. What brings him to this festive scene? Why, he is coming this way, and as I have a particular objection to his company, I will leave you."

The individual whom Mr. Knobbs had mentioned, advanced towards Mark Stanford and his companion with a slow and measured step, and when he had arrived within a few paces of them, he stopped and confronted them. He was a very old man, of tall and bony figure, attired in a costume of a singular character. His face was swarthy and wrinkled, his features sharp and irregular, his

eyes small, but particularly penetrating, and his hair, which fell over his shoulders, was as white as silver. This singular being resided in a lonely habitation, near the sea-side, and was supposed to be able to penetrate into the secrets of futurity, and for that reason was looked upon with a kind of superstitious awe by the humble classes of society, and by the more respectable and intelligent portion of community with some degree of deference. Whenever the tempest raged the fiercest, and the ocean threatened inevitable destruction to all who were exposed to its perils, old Reuben was to be seen standing on the summit of a lofty rock near his wretched dwelling, laughing in high glee, so that the furious battling of the elements and his appearance were always considered as the harbingers of some horrid calamity. There he would remain for hours, heedless of the rain, which fell in torrents, or the wind, which howled around him, and in such moments as those no one had ever dared to approach him. Fixing his eyes upon Stanford with such earnestness that he quailed beneath their glance, he said—

“Hugh Granfield—Hugh Granfield, I greet you.”

Mark Stanford, as he called himself, started with astonishment and alarm as he heard his real name thus unexpectedly mentioned, and gazed upon the old man with feelings of the most indescribable character, as he demanded—

“D—n! how is this? How do you know my name? Who are you?”

“Reuben of the Hovel,” replied the singular old man, “he who ever watches in the storm and the calm, the darkness and the sunshine; whose mind never sleeps—he who penetrates the thoughts of human beings, and who is acquainted with all their secrets. You have seen me oft before, dost doubt me, Hugh Granfield?”

“Strange man, by what means have you become acquainted with my name?” demanded Stanford. “Who are you?”

“Have I not told you?” replied Reuben; “ay, Hugh Granfield, my mind’s eye has constantly watched your actions on the deep, and in your greatest privacy on shore. Not a thought passes in your mind, although thousands of miles may separate us, that can escape my knowledge.”

Mark Stanford started, and could not help trembling as he gazed on the wrinkled countenance of the man who thus addressed him.

“She is there;” resumed Reuben, in impressive accents, pointing

towards the spot where Kate Markham was standing ; "she is there Hugh Granville, the beautiful and the innocent ; she whose father's blood was shed by you : she whom you would doom to destruction. But mark me, assassin ! Kate Markham, though she and her lover are destined to receive many troubles at your hands, shall never become your victim."

"By all my hopes," exclaimed Stanford, "I cannot, will not, endure this. I will know more of you, and by what means you have arrived at the knowledge you pretend to possess." ■

"You will know that soon enough, to your cost," replied Reuben, with a derisive laugh ; "the pirate farmer will in due time be revealed, and his crimes denounced to the world."

"Croaking hound," exclaimed Stanford, "I can endure this no longer !"

As he thus spoke, he rushed upon the old man, but in an instant he was felled to the earth by a blow on the head from the staff which the old man carried ; and when Pierce, who was lost in astonishment, raised him to his feet, Reuben was gone.

"Is this some wild delusion ?" he ejaculated. "Pierce, heard you what he said ?"

"Undoubtedly I did," replied the latter, "and from the agitation of your manner I should imagine that he spoke the truth."

"Think you that this awkward affair has been observed ?" asked Stanford.

"No," replied Pierce ; "it's my opinion that the persons assembled were too deeply engaged in their sports to take notice of it."

"It is fortunate if they did not," said Mark, "for it might have excited dangerous suspicions. See, the proud and scornful beauty again joins in the dance, and lavishes her attentions on my hated rival. The sight inflames my brain, and urges me to deeds of desperation ; but, my day of triumph shall come ; Kate Markham, you shall yet be mine ! Jack Junk, the sanguine hopes you now encourage shall never be realized ; and before many weeks have elapsed, you and the pretended farmer, Mark Stanford, shall become better acquainted."

"If what I have heard be true," said Pierce, "the *Defiance*, to which Jack belongs, will sail from this port in a few weeks, and he, as one of the crew, must sail with her and leave the girl of his heart behind. Had you not better wait till she is deprived of her protec

tor, before you endeavor to put your designs against her into execution?"

"True," coincided Stanford, "but we will talk further at a future time: at present I am all impatience to pay my homage to the fair Queen of May."

"Come, then," said Pierce, "and let us join the sports; and be careful by your conduct not to betray the real thoughts that are passing in your mind."

Mark Stanford returned no answer, and they walked together towards the place where Kate and her joyous companions were assembled. Our hero and his lover beheld their approach with no very pleasurable emotions, and Jack, taking her arm, led her to a seat, and took his place by her side.

"Would to heaven," said Kate, "that that man, whom I cannot look upon without feelings of repugnance, and instinctive and unaccountable horror, had not made his appearance here to-day."

"Avast there, my lass," replied Jack. "I own that I dislike the swab as much as you can, for I have reason to do so, since he has had the presumption to attempt to supplant me in your affections, and to raise a mutiny in your breast. But you have nothing to fear from the black-looking luoper; he will not dare to insult you while Jack Junk is by your side. Should he do so, I will throw my grappling-irons upon him immediately, and he will be glad to sheer off as quick as he can, I'll warrant."

Kate smiled upon him one of her sweetest smiles, and the next moment Mark Stanford and his companion approached, and the former, bending one knee to the earth with mock devotion and humility, said—

"Fair Queen of May! beauteous Kate Markham, permit one of the humblest of your admirers to offer you the sincere homage of his heart on this occasion, and to——"

"Avast heaving there, mate!" interrupted Jack; "belay that palaver, for it neither suits my ears nor those of my pretty Kate. I have had enough of your *friendship* already."

Mark Stanford arose, and fixed a look of indignation upon our hero as he replied—

"Methinks that your observations are rather abrupt and uncalled for. Surely I can offer no offence by merely doing that which

everybody else present at this rustic festival has been privileged to do?"

"Hark you, Mr. Mark Stanford," returned Jack. "I am a man of few words, but I am never afraid to speak my mind, whether I offend or please. I know very well, in spite of the false colors you now hoist, that you bear us ill-will. If Kate is in want of compliments, I dare say I can accommodate her to her heart's content, and therefore she has no occasion to come to you for 'em. I would advise you not to come athwart my hawser, or you will find Jack Junk an awkward customer to deal with."

"Indeed!" said Stanford, with a bitter sneer, "I do not doubt the bravery of Jack Junk, but I utterly despise his threats. You have not a foolish, headstrong boy to deal with, which you may some day discover to your cost."

"Mr. Stanford," remonstrated Kate, who was alarmed at the warmth of her lover, and the threats which were conveyed in the observations of his rival, "I beg you to desist; the sentiments of Kate Markham can never change, and she possesses too proud and candid a spirit to seek for a moment to conceal them."

Stanford bit his lips and frowned, while Kate averted her looks with a feeling of disgust.

"If that fellow is not an arrant scoundrel at heart," said Jack, when Stanford was gone, "I am much mistaken."

"Dear Jack," said Kate, "I wish you to avoid coming into collision with him as much as possible. There is a mystery about him which excites my suspicion, and I am strongly inclined to believe he is not what he represents himself to be."

"Why, for the matter of that, my lass," replied her lover, "I am strangely inclined to be of your opinion; but whoever he is, I care not; and as for his threats, I heed them no more than a puddle in a tempest. But come, my sweet Kate, let us join our friends in the sports of the day."

Kate smiled her assent, and her lover entered with the greatest spirit into the lively pleasures of the dance. Evening came, and still the revels were gay as ever, and seldom had Kate Markham and her lover felt more happy than now. It happened that our hero had occasion to retire into the house for a moment, and left Kate in the company of two of her female friends, never for a moment imagining that any harm could occur to her in such a place



PORTRAIT OF HUGH, THE PIRATE.



Something attracted the attention of her friends, they suddenly left her, and she found herself alone. She was about to join a party of the festive company, in another part of the lawn, when she was surprised and alarmed on finding her arm grasped rudely by some person behind, and looking round she beheld Mark Stanford.

"Fair Kate," said he, in assumed accents of respect and admiration, "be not alarmed, nor look so scornfully upon me. Surely there is nothing so particularly revolting in my appearance as to cause this feeling. Allow me the happiness of a few moments' private conversation with you, while my rival is away."

"Unhand me, Mr. Stanford, I command you," said Kate, with a look of resentment; "this boldness is unpardonable. You already know my sentiments, and why do you persist in annoying me?"

"Kate Markham," returned Stanford, "I can endure anything but your scorn; I love you with all the fervor of intense passion; am prepared to idolize you, to——"

"Hold, sir," interrupted Kate; "release me, or dread the consequences."

She struggled violently, as she thus spoke, to release herself.

"Nay, beauteous Kate Markham," said Stanford, "your resistance does but increase my determination, and I will not resign the opportunity I now have, of repeating the real thoughts and feelings I entertain towards you, let the consequences be whatever they may. But why thus scorn me? I have the means to make you independent—I make no empty boast, for Mark Stanford is not the humble individual he appears to be. I offer you a heart that nothing can ever change—I lay my fortune at your feet, and——"

"Villain!" cried the disgusted damsel, "I will no longer listen to you. Detain me not, or you will have cause to repent. Help! oh, help!"

"Silence!" cried Stanford, still retaining his hold, and endeavoring to imprint a kiss upon her lips; but Kate screamed louder than before, and Stanford, with an oath, released his hold, and was flying from the spot, when he saw Jack Junk approaching that way, and found it would be quite useless to attempt to avoid him. Kate was so overcome by terror, that for a moment she was unable to move and could with difficulty keep herself from fainting. The enraged seaman darted upon Stanford, and grasping him by the collar said—

"Why, you infernal swab! you confounded old pirate! and so you have the daring to bear down upon the fair craft during the absence of her commander? Now, shiver my timbers, if I haven't as good a mind to scuttle your figure-head, as ever I had to drink my allowance of grog. But this time I will suffer you to escape, but as sure as my name's Jack Junk, if ever I catch you on my track again, I will give you such a thrashing as you will never forget as long as you live."

Thus saying, our hero thrust him from him, and Mark Stanford staggered and fell to the earth, but was quickly on his feet again, and foaming with rage, was about to spring upon his youthful rival, when Kate, with a loud cry, rushed into the arms of her lover, and thus prevented the consequences which in all probability would have taken place.

"Oh, forbear, forbear, I implore you," she said, addressing herself to our hero, "and suffer him to depart."

"The rascally pirate," said the brave young seaman, fixing upon Mark Stanford a look of the utmost indignation; "he dare to insult my Kate—my innocent Kate! I could kill the lubber for his insolence. Sheer off, ye infernal swab; but if I ever catch you at the same game again, may I never go aloft again if I do not send you to the devil in less time than the bo'sun could pipe all hands."

"Jack, Jack," said Stanford with a terrible frown, "for the present you may seem to triumph, but my day will come at last, and then you shall have bitter cause to repent the business of this night. From this moment I am your deadly enemy, and tremble at the power I possess, which you little suspect."

"Let me go, Kate," said her lover; "am I thus to listen, without resenting them, to the insults and threats of this daring scoundrel?"

"Oh, heed them not, dear Jack," she said; "he means not what he says. Mr. Stanford, I beg of you not to provoke this quarrel further, or the consequences may be fatal. You must acknowledge, if you are not quite insensible to every feeling of truth and honor, that you alone are to blame."

"Oh, of course," returned Stanford, with a sneer; "but I go; though I promise you once more, that the time will come when we shall meet again under very different circumstances to the present."

As he thus spoke, he shook his fist menacingly at Jack Junk, and

nurried from the spot ; Kate being greatly relieved after he had taken his departure.

The farm which Mark Stanford, or rather Hugh Granville, occupied was a very respectable one, and he was looked upon as a prosperous man ; though his reserved and repulsive manners gained him but few friends and acquaintances in the neighborhood, and for his part, he did not appear at all anxious to cultivate that of any one except the uncle of Kate Markham, and his motives for that need no explanation. There was one part of the farm, however, which none but those in the confidence of Stanford were ever allowed to enter, and which had a secret entrance, known only to a select few. This was at the back of the house, and consisted of two or three spacious apartments of an ancient description, and which were furnished in a manner so as to afford accommodation to several individuals. They were all situated upon the ground floor, and it had often been whispered among the servants that they had frequently heard strange noises mingled with the voices of men, proceed from those rooms, though who the men were, what they met for in so secret a manner, and where they came from, they could not form the slightest conjecture. This circumstance caused no little surprise among the servants, but they, fearful of offending their master, never on any occasion ventured to breathe a sentence of it abroad, so that no person in the neighborhood knew anything of it. On the night of the festival, after that which had taken place between him and Jack, Stanford, muttering curses to himself, and vowing vengeance against his rival, quickly bent his steps towards home, and on arriving there he walked round to the back of the house, and passing through a low gate, he stopped at one corner of the building, took a key from his pocket, and after raking a second or two among the ivy he applied it to the lock, and a door in the wall opened and revealed a dark, narrow passage. He, after traversing two or three apartments, all of which were furnished, and well supplied with fire-arms and swords, came to the door of one, from the crevices of which lights might be seen to issue, and the voices of men in earnest conversation might be heard. This door was locked on the inside, but Stanford having knocked three times, the voices ceased, and some one from within demanded who was there ?

“ Why, who should it be but me ? ” replied Stanford.

The door was immediately opened by a rough looking man, and

Stanford entered the room, which was furnished in a similar manner to the rest, and contained about half a dozen men of the most repulsive aspects, and who arose from the tables at which they were seated on his entrance and welcomed him. Stanford took a seat, and hastily swallowed a glass of wine.

"You are late, master," said Pierce, for he was one of the party "and do not seem to be over well pleased."

"No, confound it," replied Stanford; "but it is no more than I expected, as I told you to-day. The girl is as cold as ice, and as proud as an empress; and as for Jack Junk, he holds complete dominion over her, and sets every one at defiance. Perhaps he would alter his tale if he only knew who I really am, and that farmer Stanford, as he is supposed to be, has a gallant vessel at his command, and as daring a crew to serve under him, as ever braved the perils of the deep."

"True, captain," said Pierce; "the Raven is no cockle-shell, and has weathered many a storm, and triumphed in many hundreds of engagements. But how did you succeed?"

"Why, I contrived to force my conversation upon Kate during the temporary absence of Jack," answered Stanford: "but listen."

He then recapitulated that with which the reader is already made acquainted.

The real character of the pretended Mark Stanford, the former, we imagine, has been sufficiently explained to the reader. He was the atrocious and dauntless captain of the pirate vessel, the Raven, who for so many years had been, with his ferocious crew, who never were known to show the least mercy to those whom they overpowered; the terror of the ocean, and who seemed to set defeat and defeat at defiance, notwithstanding all the efforts that had been made, and the stratagems that were formed, to overpower them. His crew, which was numerous, consisted of ruffians of the most savage and desperate character, of several nations. English, Spanish, and Portuguese, wretches who were ready for the perpetration of any crime, and who dared not murmur at his commands, whatever they might be. So extraordinary and unaccountable were the proceedings of these pirates, and they appeared so suddenly, and in different places, far apart from each other, when least expected, that many were half inclined to believe their captain to possess supernatural power, which rendered him unconquerable, and they

could not, in spite of themselves, help looking upon him with feelings amounting to awe and dread. Such were the schemes he had to metamorphose the appearance of his vessel, and his own person, when he chose to put into any port or harbor, that not the slightest suspicion could be excited, and thus he escaped with impunity. As captain Sinclair, of the *Enterprise*, he was looked upon with the utmost respect when on shore, and received into the most fashionable society, and when alone, and he had re-assumed his disguise as Mark Stanford, he would laugh in exultation at the manner in which he was enabled to deceive so many, and the surprise and terror which his numerous deeds had excited. Another advantage he gained by those disguises, was to become acquainted with the numerous plans that were formed to detect him and to crush his power, so that he was ever enabled to frustrate them, and laugh his enemies to scorn ; and thus it was that there seemed not to be the least chance of the daring career of the wild *Raven of the Seas* being speedily brought to a close.

CHAPTER II.

Kate and her Lover—Melancholy Intelligence—A Sailor's Heart, and a Sailor's Courage—The parting of Lovers—The sailing of the Fleet—The Storm.

It was about a week after the events which we have related, that our hero and Kate were seated on a bench beneath the honey-suckled casement of her uncle's dwelling, and from whence was commanded an uninterrupted view of the ocean, and the various stately vessels in the harbor. It was a lovely day, and the sight was animated in the extreme. Our hero's arm encircled the slender waist of Kate; her delicate hand was locked in his; and, while she gazed, with a melancholy expression of the most devoted affection, into his fine, handsome, and manly countenance, tears, which she could not restrain, dimmed the lustre of her sparkling eye, and sighs frequently agitated her gentle bosom. The countenance of Jack, too, although he exerted himself to the utmost to stifle his feelings, was sad, and it needed no keen penetration that something had occurred to interrupt their happiness, and to fill their minds, which lately had been so cheerful, with dismal forebodings. There had been a slight pause in their conversation; but our hero, after a momentary struggle with his feelings, now spoke.

"Kate, my dear girl," he said, "this sudden order for the sailing of the fleet is rather unexpected; but a true seaman is ready at any time when he is called upon by his country, and never flinches from his duty, however painful it may be for him to leave those he loves so dearly behind him. Come, my lovely Kate, dry your tears, and once more wear those smiles of cheerfulness with which you are wont to gladden those who know you—and I trust, with the blessing of the Great Commander above, our separation will not be for long."

"Alas!" sighed Kate, and her tears flowed faster than before, "it may be for ever!"

"Oh, say not so, my sweet Kate," returned her lover, imprinting an affectionate kiss upon her fair cheek; "I have hitherto escaped unharmed from many a danger, and why should you now despair?"

"Oh, why should the wide and perilous ocean separate two hearts that are so fondly devoted to each other?" said Kate.

"To render their happiness, at being again united, the more pure and exquisite, my love," replied Jack. "Now, Kate, I'll tell you what it is; if you continue to give way to this violent grief, you will reduce me to the weakness of a powder-monkey—and I know my Kate possesses too much spirit to wish to do that. Come, come—no more crying, lass, but let us be merry."

"But when you are gone, dear Jack," again sighed the damsel, "to what insults may I not be exposed, from the boldness of that man whom I so much abhor—Farmer Stanford!"

"He dare not insult you," said Jack, "the ugly-looking shark! if I thought he would, I would settle his business in less time than I could crack a biscuit. But, Kate, now that the day when we must once more part is fast approaching, there is one question that I would ask you, and I feel convinced that you will return me a candid and satisfactory answer."

"What is it, dear Jack?" inquired the lovely Kate Markham, eagerly.

"Will neither absence, time, nor circumstances, dear Kate," replied her lover, "change the sentiments you now so fondly, so fervently avow towards me? May I, when I once more return to my native land, shall I again be welcomed by those radiant smiles which have ever illumined my soul with hope and happiness?"

"And can you, do you doubt me, Jack?" said Kate, with a look of gentle reproach; "do you indeed doubt my fidelity, and believe that any circumstance whatever can ever alter the sentiments which my heart so fondly encourages for you alone? Dear Jack, how dreary to me will be the time when you are absent from me, how constant and fervent will be the prayers for your safety and welfare; with what torturing anxiety shall I look for your return; and when that time shall providentially arrive, oh, who will be half so happy as Kate Markham?"

"Bless you! bless you, my Kate!" cried her lover, clasping her

rapturously to his bosom. "But hark! did you not hear a voice?"

Kate did indeed hear a muttering sound, which seemed to proceed from a cluster of trees at one corner of the house. Gradually it became more distinct, and their ears were then saluted by the following remarkable words, spoken in a solemn voice:

"There is trouble for ye,
Both on land and at sea;
Youth and maiden, deride not the warning!
Oh, dreary the night
That shall on ye alight,
Ere the morn of your bliss shall be dawning!"

Kate Markham clung to her lover with terror, and they both looked towards the spot from whence the sounds seemed to proceed, in astonishment, but no human being met their gaze, and all was now again silent.

"Be not alarmed, dear Kate," said our hero, "it's only some harum-scarum lubber or another, who wishes to have a joke at our expense. What, ho! there, messmate! all fair and above-board is the maxim of Jack Junk; so if you are an honest craft, let's look at your figure-head!"

No answer was returned to this—and the fears of Kate increased.

"What!" cried Jack, in louder accents; "what! are you ashamed of your colors?—some infernal pirate's cruising off this coast, mayhap. Be not alarmed, Kate; lay by a moment, and I will be alongside of him in no time!"

Kate timidly resumed her seat, and our hero darted hastily in among the cluster of trees, and looked anxiously in every direction, but as far as his eye could stretch, he could not behold a human being, and he returned to Kate in a state of the most inconceivable surprise and bewilderment.

"Well," he said, "this is one of the most singular adventures that I ever met with. Who could the fellow be, and where could he have gone to?"

"His words alarm me, dear Jack," said the damsel; "did you not notice their singular and mysterious import?"

"Yes, they were remarkable enough, Kate," answered our hero; "but they were hardly worth notice: witches or wizards do not trouble the earth in these days: such yarns may do very well to

gull the land-lubber with, but no person of common sense will take any heed to them. Think no more about it; and see, just in good time, comes my honest friend and patron, Joe Trennant, making full sail towards us as fast as his old timber toe will let him."

"Jack Junk, ahoy!—the Kate Markham, ahoy!" shouted the old veteran, at the top of his voice, as he had hobbled towards them; "yard-arm and yard-arm, my lad and lass; where are all our mess-mates? why don't they man the yards, and give three cheers for Jack Junk, Kate Markham, and the navy? Steady, Joe—steady she goes. All right! Jack, my lad, your fin; Kate Markham, my dainty lass, my best service to you: upon my soul, you look prettier than ever! if it's not enough, to do an old fellow's heart like mine good to gaze at you; and if it was not that I am afraid that Jack would be jealous, the young dog, I would steal a kiss from that blushing cheek, as true as my name's Joe Trennant."

Jack laughed heartily at the old man's humor, and Kate smiled: and, after they had both welcomed him, he took a seat on the bench by the side of the young seaman.

"So, Jack, my'lad," he said, after a pause, "in two days more you again quit old England's shores. Oh, I wish this old hulk of mine was in proper trim, wouldn't I be one amongst ye? But I say, Jack, I have a word or two to say to you."

"And what is that, my friend?" asked the young seaman.

"Why, in the first place," replied Joe, "this is the anniversary of the day when my late messmate, poor Jack Junk, and myself, saved you from an untimely death. 'It was a fortunate thing—and Jack used to say, that everything seemed to prosper with him after he had taken you under his protection—and I believe it did.'"

"To that good old man," said Jack, fervently, "my lasting gratitude is due, and I must ever cherish his memory as I do my own life: may the Almighty rest his soul in peace! Would to God that the life of her who was doubtless my mother, could also have been preserved!"

"Yes," returned Joe; "it was an unfortunate job, poor creature."

"And did you find nothing upon her which might lead to a discovery as to who she was?" asked Kate.

"No," answered Joe Trennant; "but I am certain, from her appearance, that she was of no mean station of life. But there is

one thing I wish particularly to impart to you on this occasion, Jack."

"Proceed," said our hero; "I am all attention."

"On the death of him who adopted you as his son," continued Joe, "he entrusted to my care a locket containing a portion of hair, and the miniature likeness of a gentleman which he said he himself found suspended from your neck. This he desired me to deliver to you on the twenty-first anniversary of the day on which you were saved, and not before; he also requested me to enjoin you to take particular care of it, as it might, at some future period, not improbably lead to a discovery as to whom your parents were."

Jack took the locket, and, after gazing steadfastly at it for a few moments, said—

"I will treasure this as I would my own life, although I fear that there is little probability, after the lapse of so many years, of my ever being able to discover my origin."

"Why, as for that matter, my boy," said Joe, "I do not know. Many more improbable things than that have happened. But, at any rate, should that be the case, and I should be living, there would be no difficulty in proving your identity. Who knows but the time may come, when Jack Junk, the tar for all weathers, may prove to be a gentleman? Splice my timbers! wouldn't that prove a glorious day for the British Navy? What a jollification we would have, to be sure! It makes me feel quite young again at the thought; and damme, if I do not think, even old cripple as I am, that on such an occasion I could dance as well and as merrily as the best of 'em! But, Kate, my lass, you look as dull as a tar without flip, again: never despair. Jack will return safe, loaded with honor and brimful of love; and who knows but that the village bells may shortly afterwards be ringing a merry peal for your wedding?"

"Never!" said a loud and coarse voice, which seemed to proceed from the same spot as the singular warning they had received a short time before.

"Holloa!" cried Joe Trennant, starting up, and gazing in amazement around him; "what the devil's in the wind now? Who spoke?"

Kate had sank back on her seat, greatly surprised and terrified; but Jack, without saying a word, hastened to the spot from whence

the voice had evidently issued. He soon returned, and his looks sufficiently testified how astonished and bewildered he was.

"What the devil is this, that is playing his pranks with us?" he said. "I can see no one."

"No one!" repeated Joe Trennant; "it was the voice of a man, I'll swear, and not a very agreeable one, either! How dare he give old Joe Trennant the lie? The lubber!—would that I had him here, I would show him that I have not lost any of my courage, though I have two of my limbs."

"It is a most strange adventure," said our hero, "and I cannot understand it at all, unless it is that some of our friends are having a game with us. Be not alarmed, Kate, for no doubt all will be satisfactorily explained by and by."

Kate sighed—and Jack, having shaken the old man cordially by the hand, Joe took his departure, and the lovers retired into the house, where our hero exerted himself to the utmost to raise the spirits of Kate, and to banish the dismal forebodings from her mind. There was a numerous party of sailors and their sweethearts assembled that morning at the ship, and it seemed as if they were resolved to enjoy themselves, as this was the last day that they would have an opportunity of meeting together for some time. The largest and best rooms in the inn had been prepared for their accommodation: old Kit Breezely was, as usual, all bustle and activity in his business; and Joe Trennant shone conspicuous amongst the guests, and created considerable mirth by the jokes he cracked and the yarns he spun.

"Belay there!" shouted the veteran; "what cheer, messmates? Yo, ho! Here you are all safe aboard, in the twinkling of a handspike. Now, my hearties, what cheer? Come, push about the grog—pipe all hands for mischief. No bad looks to-day, for it may be a long time before we shall meet again; and therefore we must give the grog no quarter at parting. What say you, Kit, you old son of a sea-cook?"

"You are right, Joe," answered Kit, "as you always are; but what say you, lads and lasses; I suppose you will have a dance? It is never too early to commence mirth."

"Ay, ay! a dance! a dance!" shouted two or three of the sailors, in a breath.

"Hold! hold!" cried Joe Trennant; "Jack Junk is not alongside

of us yet; and for any of you to shake a toe without him, would be like going to sea without a jolly-boat."

"Ay," observed one of the sailors, "there is no beginning the dance without Jack Junk: though I say it, for a hop and a hearty laugh, there isn't his equal."

"His equal!" repeated Joe; "no, no—I'd back Jack Junk for anything against any lad in the navy. I suppose he has gone to fetch his sweetheart, and I dare say we shall see them crowding all sail this way presently."

At this moment there was a loud scream heard outside, which seemed to proceed from no great distance from the house; and the guests all started towards the doors and windows.

"Hollo!" cried Joe Trennant; "what's in the wind now? Signals of distress! Clear the gangway, and give us sea-room! Crowd all sail, messmates, and bear down upon the enemy, whoever he may be! Yo, ho! yo, ho!"

Several sailors, with old Joe Trennant at their head, hobbling along as fast as he could, immediately left the house, and hastened towards the spot from whence they had heard the cries; and they had not proceeded far, when they beheld Jack Junk supporting the insensible form of Kate on his arm, engaged with Mark Stanford in a desperate combat; whilst Constance was standing by, wringing her hands, and making the air resound again with her cries for help.

"Sink my mizzen-top!" exclaimed Joe; "my boy Jack, yard-arm and yard-arm with that infernal swab!—what's the meaning of this? Crowd all sail, my lads, and lay your grappling-irons on the rascally pirate! Yo, ho! Jack Junk, ahoy!"

"Yes, Joe," replied our hero; "and it is lucky for him that my time for cruising about this coast is so short, or he should pay dearly for his tricks; however, the time will come, I have no doubt, when I shall have an opportunity to overhaul him, and I will pour such a broadside in upon his black-looking old hulk, that will shake every timber. I was bearing down towards the ship, when I heard signals of distress; and, veering round a point, I beheld the fellow yard-arm and yard-arm with my innocent Kate. Poor girl, he has terribly frightened her; but it was fortunate I happened to be within hail, or there is no knowing what might have happened."

"The scoundrel!" said Joe, warmly; "however, it is all well as

it happens, and it strikes me that the swab will not have the courage to hoist his colors again for some time to come. If I am not very much mistaken, this Farmer Stanford, as he calls himself, is not what he represents himself to be; but, if a sharp look-out is kept on his actions, his real character will some time or other be discovered. But come, let us hasten to the ship, and see to the recovery of poor Kate. Constance, my lass, give old Joe Trennant your arm, and he will pilot you safe into port."

Constance complied with the old man's request without making use of any observation, and Jack, still supporting the insensible form of his lover in his arms, they made their way to the house of old Kit Breezely, where everything was done to bring about the recovery of Kate, which was speedily effected.

"My sweet Kate," said our hero, "how happy do I feel to think I happened to be sailing close at hand when that cowardly shark bore down against you. The fellow has the impudence of the devil, but he must look out, or he may chance to have to dearly pay for his daring. The lubber! to dare to raise his thoughts towards my pretty and innocent Kate! Why, damme, there is not a man in the whole British navy, from the poorest devil before the mast to the Lord High Admiral, who would presume to rival Jack Junk in the affections of that dear girl to whom his very soul is devoted. But cheer up, my lass, after this slight squall, and look forward to fair weather and a favorable voyage, till we anchor safe in the port of matrimony."

Kate sighed, and for a moment hid her blushing face on the shoulder of her lover.

After Mark Stanford had so abruptly quitted the spot where he had encountered his rival, bursting with rage and disappointment, and muttering curses to himself, he walked on, meditating on his future plans, but did not feel inclined to return home at present.

"Ha!" said Jack, "who have we here? A pedlar? Let's over-haul your cargo."

The pedlar was a man between fifty and sixty years of age, and there was something rather singular in his appearance; but he affected great good humor, and seemed likely, by that means, to dispose of his goods freely.

"Ah!" said Jack, looking over the handkerchiefs he carried in his pack; "you carry a good assortment, mate—here's a beauty—

it reminds me of the sky, because it's blue, and it also reminds me of my dear Kate, because it's an emblem of truth and innocence. Dear Kate, I tie this around your neck; it is but a simple gift, but I know it is quite sufficient to remind you of poor Jack when he is far away."

Kate pressed it to her lips in silence, tears at the same time starting to her eyes, and she suffered her lover to place the handkerchief round her neck.

"A very pretty present—a very handsome present," said the pedlar; "and doubtless the young woman would like to make a purchase of something to give to you, by which, whenever you looked upon it, you might remember her, and ——"

"Avast there, you lubber!" interrupted Jack; "think you there is anything Jack*Junk requires to remind him of the dear girl of his heart—that she can ever be absent from his memory? Why, I shall see her beauteous face in every wave that lashes the ship's side—in every cloud that rides the horizon. Forget my Kate! sink my mizzen top!—but you are only a land swab, and have never smelt salt water, I ——"

"Nay, master," returned the pedlar, interrupting him, "there you are mistaken, for, although I am now only what you see me to be, a poor pedlar, who toils hard enough to get a living, I have weathered many a rough gale in the course of my time, notwithstanding. However, I did not mean to offend you; I thought, perhaps, the young lady might wish to make you a present before you departed, such as a handsome tobacco-box, for instance; and, by-the-bye, I have got such a one as you don't see every day—all silver, with a miniature of a gentleman in the lid of it, as much resembling you as ever I saw two peas in a pod. It is very remarkable. I have had it a long time in my possession, and had no particular wish to part with it, only I happen to have been rather unfortunate in business of late, and ready money would be an object to me. I would sell it at a bargain."

"Well," said our hero, whose curiosity was somewhat excited by what the pedlar had said, "let us look at this wonderful box."

The pedlar immediately produced from his pocket a handsomely chased silver box, which he placed in the hands of our hero, who, opening the lid, gazed with astonishment upon a well-executed miniature enclosed in the interior.

"Why, by heaven!" exclaimed he, "this is the very counterpart of the likeness in the locket which was found suspended from my neck by him from whom I have taken my name, and which was presented to me by old Joe Trennant only the day before yesterday. Compare them, my dear Kate; did you ever see anything more alike?"

Kate examined the miniature in the lid of the box and that in the locket eagerly, and ejaculated—

"Astonishing! They are exactly alike; they must both have been done by the same person; and what an extraordinary resemblance they bear to you, my dear Jack."

"Well," returned her lover, "I think there is some likeness. How did this box come into your possession, old man?"

"I found it," answered the pedlar.

"Found it?"

"Yes."

"Where?" demanded our hero.

"On the sea-beach, many miles from here, where it appeared to have been washed from some wreck. That is more than seven years ago, and I have kept it by me ever since; but I must now part with it, if I can only find a customer. Have you any wish to purchase it, master? I will sell it to you cheap."

"What do you require for it?" inquired Jack.

The pedlar named his price, to which our hero readily agreed, and the box having become his, the pedlar took his departure to endeavor to find fresh customers from the numerous seamen assembled.

Jack Junk continued to gaze upon the miniature in the box and that in the locket with the greatest amazement for some minutes; and the longer he did so, the greater his emotion became.

"Well," he remarked, at last, "this is certainly one of the most extraordinary circumstances I ever met with. The portraits have evidently been both done for the same individual, and I am lost in a mystery. But I will treasure and preserve this box, which has come so singularly into my possession, as much as the locket; and, some day or other, if Providence so wills it, they may lead to the discovery as to who were my real parents, although it is but too probable that they are both now no more. But come, my dear Kate, you are again looking as dull as a tar upon six-water-grog.

Arouse yourself, my lass, and let us endeavor to pass the few hours we are destined to be together as happy as we can."

"Alas!" sighed Kate, "how hard is the task you would impose upon me; how do I tremble as the fatal moment so rapidly approaches when we must part, perhaps never to meet again. Never did the broad waters of the ocean appear so fearful to me as they do at present, and every stately vessel upon which my eyes now rest, bears to my imagination the gloom and horror of a floating prison. Oh, Jack, were I permitted to share with you the dangers you will have to encounter, methinks I could be content; but who will be left to comfort me when you are far away? And should you perish in the battle's dreadful carnage, what then will be left to your poor Kate but misery and despair?"

"Avast! avast, my love," said Jack, in a hoarse voice, "for your words unman me, and I shall become as weak presently as the veriest lubber that ever plodded his way through life on shore. Talk not of danger, my lass, for that was never yet entered in a sailor's log-book. Shiver my timbers, Kate! would you have me skulking like a porpoise on shore, when there are enemies of our country at sea to assist in drubbing? Come, Kate, send dull care to old Davy; let us mingle with the brave fellows and lasses here assembled, and anticipate only happiness for the future."

"Ah, dear Jack," again sighed the maiden, "how dreary will the hours wear away that separate me from you. You may deem me weak and childish, but indeed I cannot contemplate our parting without still encountering the most fearful apprehensions."

"Now, my beloved Kate," said Jack, "put a bold heart upon the business; never lower your flag to the grim enemy Despair; but have courage and confidence in a just cause."

Poor Kate's heart sank within her; she felt as if she were parting with her very life; and, had it not been for the support of her lover, she must have sunk upon the earth.

But the villain Stanford, from a place where he could not be observed, was a gratified spectator of this melancholy scene; and base were the thoughts that crowded upon his guilty mind.

"Cling to him, proud beauty," he muttered to himself, "and pour forth your vows of affection in his ear; for, if fortune favors my deep-laid designs, this is the last opportunity you will have of doing so. The Rover of the Seas marks his victim, and will secure her

at any cost. Yes, the Black Raven shall soon own as fair a mistress as ever graced a monarch's throne."

With eager eyes the pirate watched them, as they slowly bent their way towards the harbor; and then folding a huge mantle around him, which he wore on that occasion, the better to conceal his person from observation, he followed at a distance. The fatal moment more rapidly approached, and poor Kate clung, sobbing convulsively, to her lover's bosom, and felt as if her heart would break.

"Oh! Jack, dear Jack," she said, "we must not, cannot part; the thought maddens me, and my strength can never support the dreadful trial. Oh, why has cruel destiny decreed that we should be thus separated, and that you should be exposed to such terrible dangers? My heart never felt so full as it does at present, and the most awful forebodings crowd upon my imagination—we shall never meet again!"

"Avast! avast! my sweet love," replied our hero, "and bear up against this trial like a woman. It is only a slight breeze, which will soon blow over, and all will be calm and favorable weather for the remainder of our voyage. Not meet again! oh, do not say so—do not think so. Our separation will be but brief, and the happiness of our meeting again will be ten fold."

"Oh, God!" exclaimed Kate, still clinging frantically to him, "I cannot; my heart will break; my brain is distracted—hark how fiercely the tempest rages! see the foaming billows mount like raging demons to the clouds, o'erwhelming all within their fury in destruction. Jack, dear Jack, you shall not—must not leave me thus; am I not your affianced bride, and who shall dare to tear you from me? We will not part."

"Kate, Kate," said the seaman, in a broken voice, "you—you unman me; you make me a child. Nay, nay—this is not like my bonny Kate; cheerily, cheerily—do not take on so, my poor lass."

Gently he disengaged himself from her embraces, and with a deep sigh she sank fainting in the arms of her uncle. Poor Jack fixed one look of the most intense affection upon her—pressed most fervent kisses upon her pale cheeks and forehead; his heart was too full to suffer him to give utterance to a syllable; and pressing the hands of Constance, Mr. Markham, and Joe Trennant, he rushed hastily from the spot, and was quickly lost to view among his shipmates

who were going on board. Mr. Markham still supported the insensible form of his niece in his arms, and the whole of those on shore gazed anxiously at the fleet, which was now preparing to set sail. In a few minutes the deafening cheers of the sailors on board the different vessels informed them that the time was come, and directly afterwards the gallant fleet steered its course majestically out of the harbor. The eyes of Constance and her father, and Joe Trennant, instinctively fixed themselves upon the *Defiance*, and there the first object that met their gaze was Jack Junk who had mounted one of the yards, and with his eyes apparently fixed upon them, waving a handkerchief in the air. Mark Stanford stood upon an eminence from which he could watch every thing without interruption ; and, as the fleet sailed out of the harbor, his heart bounded with exultation.

"They go," he said ; "and he, the favored lover of that fair girl whom I have destined to be my future mistress, will, I trust, never more return to annoy me. May the wild waves engulph his carcase, or the sword of the enemy lay him low. But, should Providence restore him in safety to his native land—shall he ever again behold that girl who is the very idol of his soul ? No ; I, Hugh Granfield, the pirate captain of the *Raven*, swear by all the infernal hosts he shall not. Long ere then she shall be mine, and sailing with me in my gallant barque upon the bright blue waters of the deep, where no help can come to her—no one can rescue her from my power."

Thus soliloquizing, the villain Stanford folded his arms across his broad chest, and continued to watch the departing fleet with eager looks of satisfaction. The firing of the guns aroused our heroine from her state of insensibility, and passing her fair hand across her forehead, as if to collect her thoughts, she gazed wildly and vacantly around her.

"What fearful dream is this that has tortured my imagination ?" she ejaculated ; "methought that I was separated from my lover, and that the cruel billows bore him from me far away. But no ; it cannot be ! who would dare to separate two beings who are so devoted to each other ? But he is not here ! I do not hear his voice ;—why do you hold me thus ? Jack—beloved Jack, oh ! where are you ?"

"Be calm, dear Kate," remonstrated her uncle ; "be calm, and

put your trust in the goodness of Providence, who will not fail to watch over and protect your lover, and restore him safe to your arms."

"Ah!" exclaimed Kate, suddenly starting, and gazing in the direction of the fleet, which was fast receding from the view; "they have taken him from me; the cruel waves bear him far away, and we shall never meet again. Jack, dear Jack! Oh, heaven help me!"

The fleet now appeared only as a dim speck upon the distant horizon, and Kate, again overpowered by the intensity of her feelings, uttered a faint cry of despair, and sank insensible in the arms of her uncle.

"Poor lass!" said Joe Trennant; "this trial is too much for her; bear her into the house, friend Markham, and let us see to her recovery. Her spirits have got into the trough of a sea of troubles; I wish I could only lend a hand at the windlass, or take in a reef of her canvas if the wind blows too hard."

"Ah, Master Trennant," said Markham, "this is indeed a severe trial for the poor girl who loves Jack Junk so fondly; but may heaven watch over his safety, and once more restore him to her arms." With these words Mr. Markham bore the insensible form of his niece into the house, and was followed by Constance and the others—Mark Stanford from the place of his concealment watching them with deadly looks of malice, as they retired.

"My rival is gone," he muttered to himself, "and if fortune does not frown upon me, they will never meet again. Kate Markham, a few weeks, perhaps only a few short days, shall elapse ere you shall become the prize of the pirate, him whom you so thoroughly hate and despise. Yes; I have marked you for my victim; and, by all my hopes, nothing whatever shall save you from my power. Yonder lies my gallant barque at anchor, and ere long I shall have you. Kate Markham, I will have you safely there on board, and bear you far away from your native land, and beyond the reach of assistance from your friends. Till then, they may continue to despise the supposed Farmer Stanford. Ha! ha! ha! I go to further arrange my plans." He turned to go away as he gave utterance to these words, and beheld the mysterious old man, Reuben of the Cliff, standing but a short distance from him, and leaning on his staff, gazing earnestly upon him.

"How now, old man?" demanded Stanford; "why do you again

cross my path? what would you with me? Stand aside, I command you, and let me pass."

"You command!" repeated Reuben, with a look of ineffable contempt; "pirate, dog!" murmured Reuben of the Cliff: "who knows all thy dark secrets, and holds thy fate in his hands? You think, that now your rival has departed, your triumph will be certain, and that nothing can save the innocent Kate Markham, the daughter of that unfortunate man, who perished by your bloody and inhuman hands."

"Cease, babbling old wretch!" cried Stanford; "cease your wild predictions, and begone. By what means you have become acquainted with my secrets, I cannot imagine; but, if I thought you would dare to betray me, I would speedily adopt such means as would silence you forever."

"Idiot!" returned Reuben; "dare you threaten me, whose power your guilty, blood-stained conscience will not suffer you to deny? Beware, beware; the storm is gathering; black and ponderous clouds darken the horizon, which in due time will burst and overwhelm you with their fury. Remember, that I could this moment denounce thee to the world as a pirate and a murderer, and at once bring thy guilty career to a termination; but for the present I will suffer thee to escape the punishment you so richly deserve; for I have deep-laid designs in contemplation, which will inflict upon you tenfold torture and disgrace. Till then, you may continue in your fancied triumph; but the day will come, depend upon it, and a terrible day will that be for the pirate chief."

"Strange being!" ejaculated Stanford, "I cannot endure those threats; I will know who and what you are, and how you have acquired the knowledge you possess."

"Yes, villain," replied Reuben, "and you shall know some day, to your shame and confusion. The day of retribution will come, and let the anticipation of it fill your guilty soul with terror."

"Away!" exclaimed Stanford, "I will hear no more! I scorn thy boasted power! what witness have you of that of which you accuse me? I defy you and your empty threats. Who will look upon your words any more than the wild ravings of a wretched maniac?"

"Say you so, Hugh Granfield?" returned the old man; "oh, but you will find yourself most wofully deceived; and it will then be

the turn of Reuben of the Cliff to triumph! Yonder rides your pirate barque, the pretended fair trader, the Enterprise,—is it not so? Many are the tempests she has braved—many are the perils she has encountered. Her deck has been washed by the crimson blood of brave and innocent men. Terrible are the scenes of carnage that have been enacted on board that dreadful vessel beneath thy savage command; but the day will come when her power will be defeated, and yourself and your inhuman crew be doomed to an ignominious death, amid the execrations of those against whom you have so long waged a cruel and inhuman war of destruction. Tremble, pirate! miscreant! murderer!”

“By all the infernal host!” exclaimed Stanford, “I will no longer thus tamely submit to be mocked, taunted, and threatened. Old croaking idiot, begone, I say, and dare not again to cross my path, or tremble at my vengeance! Know you not what it is to incur the wrath of Hugh Granfield, the Rover of the Seas?—him who never yet failed to keep his word—whose aim is sure—whose name the boldest cannot utter without a shudder of horror—and who hitherto has been able to set all power at defiance?”

“I know all,” replied the old man, in a calm voice, “and treat your threats with the most ineffable contempt. Nay, you may frown, but I know you tremble at the power of Reuben of the Cliff, although you would fain affect to despise him. I go; but often shall we meet again, and I will never cease to repeat those fearful facts that are so unwelcome to your ears.”

Thus saying, the old man turned abruptly away, and, darting rapidly down the side of a steep rock, he was out of sight before the villain Mark Stanford had recovered from his surprise and confusion.

“D—n!” he at last fiercely exclaimed; “shall I tamely brook this? The infernal shark evidently knows too much, and he is a dangerous customer to be permitted to cruise about this coast. He knows all my secrets—has threatened to foil my designs, and has it in his power at any time to betray me. This must be prevented at all hazards. I must secure the old man, and silence his busy tongue forever. It can easily be accomplished; and, in order to secure my own safety, I must lose no time about it. It shall be done, and that this very night. Idiot he must be, knowing my desperate and do

terminated character, to venture thus boldly to threaten me : it is well that he has done so, for it has put me on my guard."

Having thus spoken, Mark Stanford once more cast a glance towards the house where Kate and her friends were assembled, and then slowly bent his way towards his home. It was in vain that Constance and her father endeavored to ameliorate the grief of Kate—the most dismal presentiments continued to haunt and distract her mind, and she felt, now that her lover had departed, as if she was left alone in the world, and that happiness could never again be hers. At length, feeling restless and uneasy at the tavern, they returned towards home. They had scarcely reached the door of their dwelling, when dark and threatening clouds obscured the horizon ; the wind howled in hollow and fitful gusts around, and everything gave token of an approaching storm ; and soon the lightning flashed its forked fury—the thunder rolled loudly along the vault of heaven, and the rain descended in an overwhelming torrent upon the earth. Every moment the tempest increased in fury, and at length it became completely frightful. Kate was terrified, and clung to her uncle in speechless agony. She thought of her lover, and her heart sunk with horror when she pictured to herself the dangers to which he was so soon exposed, and from which it was too likely he would not be able to escape.

"Oh, God !" she ejaculated, at last, "what will become of him in such a terrible storm as this? What vessel can weather such a frightful tempest? He is lost—he is lost! Alas! how soon are my worst surmises realized! Poor Jack! why did cruel fate thus separate us? We shall never, never meet again, and all the hopes and happiness of Kate Markham are gone forever!"

She wept bitterly as these thoughts arose to her tortured imagination, and her uncle in vain endeavored to console her. More than an hour passed away, and still the storm continued to increase in violence instead of abating, and it was sufficient even to make the stoutest heart quail with terror and awe. It was, indeed, a fearful scene. The earth was enveloped in complete darkness, save at intervals, when the ethereal fire flashed across the sky, rendering the horrors of the scene still more impressive. The terror of Kate became more powerful and insupportable, and Constance in vain tried to tranquilize her.

"Oh, that I had been permitted to accompany him," she sighed,

"To share with him all his dangers ; and, even though it should have been the will of heaven that we should have perished in this terrible storm, methinks I could have met my fate without a murmur had I been allowed to die in his arms. Oh, Jack—my dear Jack ! what is now your situation, tossing about on the wild waters of the deep, on such a night of horror as this ! God of heaven ! watch over and protect, I beseech Thee, the life of the poor mariner, and restore him in safety to his native land !"

"Be comforted, dear Kate," replied her cousin, "and rest assured that an all-merciful Providence will not fail to listen to and regard your prayers. The fleet will no doubt put in at the nearest port until the storm has abated, and your lover will be safe. Do not give way to any unnecessary fears, and depend upon it that all will be well."

Kate shook her head and sighed deeply, for it was in vain that she tried to dissipate the melancholy thoughts and forebodings which distracted her mind ; and thus they continued to converse at intervals during the night, and the morning found them both languid and unrefreshed.

CHAPTER III.

The Midnight Murder.—The Pirate Vessel.—The Designs of Mark Stanford are more fully developed.

THE last meeting with Reuben of the Cliff, and the daring threats he had held out, had made the most powerful impression upon the mind of Mark Stanford. On arriving at home, the storm, having overtaken him on the way, he sought the presence of Pierce the Raker, to whom he related all that had taken place, and asked his advice on the subject.

"My advice is very soon given, captain," said Pierce; "the dead tell no tales, and the sooner it is done, the better."

"That is my opinion," said the pirate; "for I am not safe a moment while old Reuben is suffered to live. This very night we will settle the business."

"Agreed. I am ready to accompany you, for I suppose you have no desire to go alone?"

"No," answered Stanford; "and I might find your assistance necessary. Besides, I have a wish to go aboard our vessel, to see that everything is going on right. In a few days, if all goes on as well as I desire, I much mistake if Kate Markham will not be safely on board the 'Raven;' and then away to sea in search of fresh adventures, and to endeavor to meet with more booty."

"Ay, captain," observed Pierce; "and, for my part, I do not care how soon that time comes, for I am not used to this sort of life; and I long to be on board our gallant barque again, and engaged in business. It is so long since I mixed in the battle, that I am afraid I shall quite get my hand out, if I am suffered to remain skulking on shore much longer."

"Well, Pierce," returned Stanford, "your wishes will soon be

gratified, never fear. But what a storm this is—eh? Jack Junk has got rough weather to commence his voyage with; and Kate Markham, no doubt, is fretting her little eyes out in alarm for his safety. May he never experience finer weather! that's all the harm I wish him, though I do not expect he will ever have the opportunity to annoy me again; and, should he return home again, it will only be to learn that the girl he loves is lost to him forever, and that she has become the victim of the despised Mark Stanford, the supposed honest farmer. Ha! ha! ha!"

"Ah, captain," remarked Pierce, "you will then indeed have cause to exult, and bitter will be the grief and disappointment of your rival. Kate Markham is a damsel every way worthy to become the mistress of the pirate chief; and I congratulate you on your good fortune. But it is finally settled that we shall execute our designs against old Reuben to-night, is it not?"

"It is," answered Stanford; "and that enemy removed, I shall have nothing then to apprehend."

They continued to converse for some time longer, and to arrange their future plans; but it was not until the clock had struck the hour of eleven, that they started forth on their murderous errand, regardless of the storm, which still raged with unabated fury. They soon arrived in the vicinity of the old man's dwelling; and, looking round to see that no one was watching them, they walked on, and in a short time stood before the door of the wretched hovel, where they paused and listened; but all was perfectly silent, and the place was buried in profound darkness. Stanford tried the door, but it was fastened on the inside, and they had no doubt that the old man had retired to rest. Pierce, however, pulled a clasp knife out of his pocket, and, after some difficulty, succeeded in picking the lock, and the door flew open. Having brought a dark lantern with them, they examined the room; but there was nobody there, and they therefore entered silently, for they had no doubt that the old man was asleep in some other part of the hovel. Having entered another apartment, which, like the one just mentioned, was quite untenanted, they stopped to listen at an opposite door, and they could then distinctly hear the sounds as of some person breathing heavy. This they had no doubt was Reuben, and they cautiously opened the door and peeped in. They found that they were not mistaken;

for, stretched on a wretched mattress in one corner of the room, was the form of Reuben, and he appeared to sleep soundly.

"'Tis well," said Pierce; "we could not have chosen a better time to put our design into execution. He sleeps soundly enough; one blow, and he will never wake again."

"Yes—yes," faltered out Stanford, with an involuntary shudder. "But stay a moment—not yet. It is almost a pity to take the life of the old man, when we could so easily secure his person, and prevent his doing any further mischief."

"Pshaw!" exclaimed Pierce, impatiently; "why should you spare him? Besides, if we settle him at once, it will save all future trouble, and there will be an end to the business."

They hastily shaded the lantern, and stepped into one corner of the room, where they were not likely to be observed; and the old man slowly arose from the mattress, and, rubbing his eyes, he gazed around him.

"It is past midnight, I should think," he observed; "but I do not care about going to sleep again, for I have had some singular and frightful dreams, and they have left a disagreeable impression upon my mind that I cannot easily get rid of. It is a wild night. How the thunder rattles and the lightning flashes! and hark, how the angry waves roar and bellow! Heaven protect the hardy mariner who is exposed to the horrors of a tempest such as this! Ah! what sound was that? I am not alone!"

"No, old man," replied Stanford, starting forward, "you are not, indeed, alone. Prepare yourself, for your time has come, and you have not many minutes to live."

"Hugh Granfield!" exclaimed Reuben, with a look of terror; "blood-stained miscreant, is it indeed you? What seek you here?"

"Your life," answered the pirate; "and can you marvel that I should do so, after the threats you have held out to me? Fool! did you suppose that I would suffer you to live to frustrate my designs, and to denounce me to the world in my real character?"

"Hugh Granfield," replied the old man, solemnly, though it was evident that his lips quivered with fear; "Hugh Granfield, I say beware what you do; but you will not dare to take my life. Monster as you are, still I cannot think you capable of such a cowardly and inhuman deed. Forbear—and, if you would not have the

vengeance of offended Heaven overtake you, abandon your brutal designs, and quit this place."

"Oh, no," replied Stanford, "you know too much for me; but had you been wise enough to have kept a still tongue, you would never have been suspected, and you might have had an opportunity of betraying me to punishment before I could have been aware of the knowledge you possess. You have worked your own destruction, and——"

"Bah!" impatiently interrupted Pierce, as he brandished a knife; "what's the use of wasting time thus? Old man, have you got anything particular to say, ere I settle the business for you?"

Poor old Reuben was now indeed greatly alarmed at the near prospect of so horrible a death; and, clasping his hands together, and gazing alternately at Pierce and Stanford, with looks of supplication, he was unable for a moment or two to give utterance to a syllable.

"Mercy! mercy!—spare me! spare me!"—at length he gasped forth; "I am an old man—a very old man—but yet not fit to die. I—I——"

"Cease, croaking hound!" cried the monster Pierce, as he plunged his knife into the old man's side, who fixed one terrible glance on his murderers, and, with a deep, frightful groan, he sunk on the floor a ghastly corpse.

Pierce stooped down, and, seizing the corpse of the unfortunate old man, was about to raise it to his shoulder, when at that moment a broad blaze of lightning filled the wretched apartment, and was succeeded by a terrific peal of thunder, which shook the hovel to its very foundation, and staggered the hardened wretch who had just given utterance to such brutal observations. He dropped the corpse upon the floor, and, covering his face with his hands, as a strange and almost overpowering sensation darted through his brain, he staggered to one corner of the room, while his guilty companion was transfixed to the spot on which he had been standing, and was unable to utter a word.

"Whew!" at length said Pierce, "it blows great guns, certainly; but no matter—we are used to such tempests as these, and it is only the land-lubber who trembles at them. But, captain, how pale you look!—come, come, belay there, and take in a reef! Let us tow this old vessel into port, and then crowd all sail to the bonny Raven, and meet the lads there."

"Stop! stop!" said Stanford; "let us be sure that there is no one lurking about who might watch us."

"Why, how squeamish you look, captain!" remarked the ruffian; "it is not very likely any one will be cruising about on such a night as this. Yes, I say, it blows great guns, with all the running-gear of thunder and lightning, and rocks, and foggy loomings to the purser's account. But, pardon me, captain—I must say, you are on this occasion like a porpoise in a storm: you turn your own way, over and over, and never seem to think of your bearings. However, to satisfy you, I will have a look-out."

He went to the door of the hovel as he spoke, and gazed eagerly out upon the tempest, which still continued to rage with the most terrific violence.

"The coast is clear," said the ruffian, returning into the room; "come, let us finish this business."

Stanford returned no answer—and Pierce Raker, raising the lifeless form of their unfortunate victim in his arms, advanced towards the very verge of the cliff, and precipitated the body of Reuben off the cliff into the deep. In the brief pause of the thunder, the pirate chief heard the heavy splash of the corpse as the dark waters received and engulfed it, and he then, for the first time, ventured to look up. Pierce was standing on the verge of the cliff, and gazing with a look of fiendish triumph and exultation into the deep below, whilst the blue lightning flashed around his tall and athletic form, and gave him almost a supernatural appearance.

"The deed is complete," he said; "your old enemy is now food for fishes, captain, and the thunder is roaring his funeral dirge. But you seem to be taken all aback: why, skipper, I am surprised at you! But come, let us weigh anchor immediately, and tow ourselves alongside the Raven."

"Avast, Pierce," replied Stanford; "I do indeed seem all aback, and to have lost my reckoning. Let us return home, and defer our visit to the ship till to-morrow; no boat could possibly live in such a sea as this."

"Pshaw, captain!" returned the ruffian, "you surprise me! you that have hitherto been accustomed to laugh at danger, and to punish those who dared to show the least sign of fear! For my own part, I glory in such a night as this; somehow it seems to come quite natural to my feelings. The voice of thunder sounds no more un-

pleasant to me than the boatswain's whistle; and as for the lightning that dances like a wild demon on the surface of the raging ocean, it affects me no more than a simple flash in the pan, at which I would as willingly light my pipe as I would crack a biscuit. The lads on board our gallant craft expect us to-night; our boat is safely moored in the cave yonder; I will take the helm, and will be answerable for the consequences: so come, captain—a stout heart upon the matter, and we shall soon reach the vessel in safety."

The observation of Pierce Raker aroused the pirate, and, without saying a word, he allowed himself to be led from the spot, and to yield to the importunities of his daring companion, although to venture in an open boat in such a terrific storm as that which was then raging, seemed to be the very height of madness and desperation. The scene which presented itself to the gaze at the moment they stepped into the boat and loosened it from its moorings, was perfectly hideous, and on she dashed with the velocity of an arrow, one moment raised to a fearful height, and anon almost engulfed in the bosom of the mountainous billows. Over the wild surging waves the boat was tossed, but still the wind drove her towards the pirate bark, which the elemental fire at intervals revealed, the waters of the deep every instant sweeping over her bulwarks, and threatening immediate destruction. There was one broad sheet of lightning more terrific than any they had yet witnessed, which spread a lurid glare for miles around, and Pierce was startled by a sudden exclamation of horror from his companion; and, turning his gaze towards him, he beheld him with fixed eyes staring at a certain part of the ocean, and saw that he was convulsed with the most powerful emotion in every limb, while his face was as pale as that of a corpse.

"Why, captain," said the ruffian, "what the devil's in the breeze now? What are you staring at so intently?"

"Do you not see him?" gasped forth Mark Stanford, in reply.

"See him?—who?" demanded Pierce: "have you turned child again, or are you dreaming?"

"No!" returned the pirate-captain, in a hoarse voice; "by h—l, he has kept his word! See! see! he approaches us, borne on the crest of the billows: and now—oh, horror!—the blue lightning's flash reveals to me, distinctly, his glassy eyes fixed full upon me!

He will come in contact with our boat! Look—look, man, and judge for yourself!”

Pierce Raker did indeed follow the direction in which Stanford pointed, and there, in the broad glare of the lightning, and riding erect, breast high above the waves, was the corpse of poor old Reuben of the Cliff, driven rapidly towards the boat, and with its filmy eyes apparently fixed intently upon them, with the same awful expression which had characterized them when he gave utterance to his dying curse.

“By the infernal host!” shouted Pierce, in a voice that might be heard beyond the thunder, “what bitter mockery is this? Shall the deep thus disgorge its food, as if to mock and defy us? D—n! the old lubber is bearing down upon us, as if he had a design to swamp us altogether. Hold hard, captain, and I will lower his top-sail in the twirling of a handspike.”

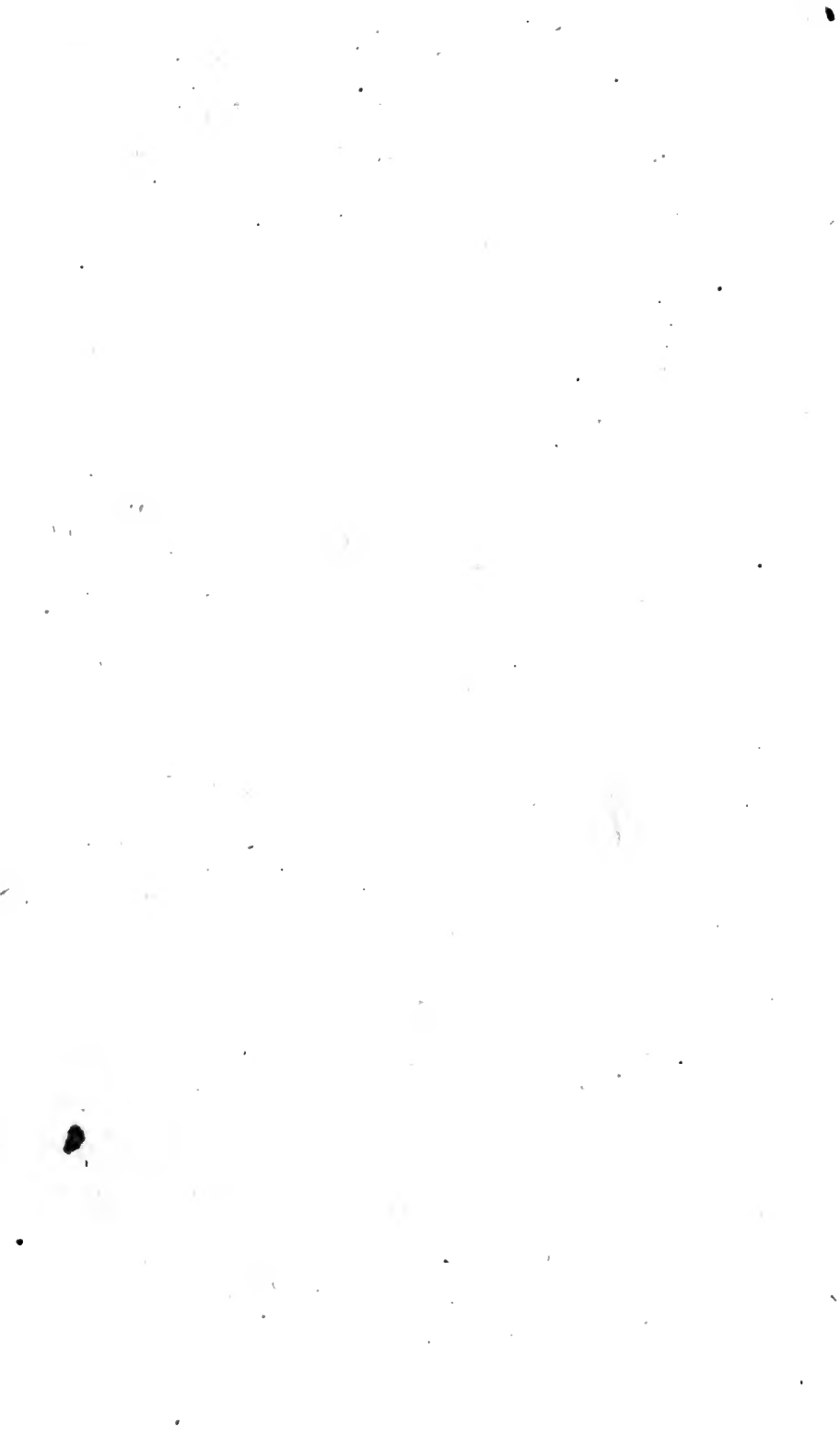
Onward, and onward more rapidly, came the corpse, while Mark Stanford was completely bound up in horror, and could not find strength to articulate a syllable; and his ferocious companion, although he attempted to pass off the circumstance with such bravado, was scarcely less alarmed, and wished himself on shore again. Another instant, and a wave washed it in the same position, directly to the head of the boat—and there, as if by some supernatural agency, it became fixed for a minute or two, and its livid features were fully revealed to the two wretches in the boat.

“Fiends of hell!” shouted Stanford, at length worked up to a pitch of distraction; “why torture me thus? Down—down, foul corpse, and no longer sear my eyes with your presence!”

Was it the effect of conscience that worked upon the imagination of the murderers at that moment, or could it be reality? But as Mark Stanford gave utterance to these words, a ghastly smile seemed to overspread the livid features of the corpse; and as the waves dashed the body away from the boat, still erect, and distinctly revealed in the glare of the lightning, a hollow laugh seemed to vibrate in their ears, and was heard above the voice of the tempest until it finally vanished in the distance. All then became profoundly dark, the senses of the pirate captain reeled, and he sank back helplessly in the boat.

They approached the vessel nearer and nearer; and when they had got within a short distance of it, perceiving that many of the





pirate crew were upon deck, they shouted at the top of their voices for assistance; for the boat was now half full of water, and their destruction seemed inevitable. Another tremendous wave dashed them nearly under the ship's bows, and at the same time she filled and was immediately sinking, when a couple of ropes were thrown over the side of the vessel, to which they clung with desperate energy, and were hauled safely on deck.

The appearance of Mark Stanford and his villainous companion, caused the utmost astonishment of the crew of the *Raven*; for, notwithstanding they had received due intimation of their coming, of course they had never expected that they would venture in such a storm as that which was then raging, and at such a nocturnal hour.

"Why, captain," observed one of the fellows, "you must have a stouter heart than even we knew you to possess, to brave the ocean in such a cockle-shell of a craft in such a tempest as this; and you and Pierce may think yourselves devilish lucky that you have reached the ship before you were capsized. But how pale you look—you—"

"Enough!" interrupted Stanford, sternly; "delay your remarks till some more fitting opportunity; I am in no humor to listen to them now. Pierce, follow me below."

The pirate crew retired in obedience to the commands of their captain, and Pierce Raker, taking his arm, accompanied him to his cabin. Stanford threw himself on a seat, and for a few minutes gazed wildly and vacantly around him.

"Why, captain," said Raker, "the adventure of the night seems to have taken you all aback, if it has not capsized you altogether. Arouse yourself; and since we have escaped all the dangers to which we were lately exposed, let us consult what is best now to be done. You have fixed your thoughts upon Kate Markham, and have determined to possess her?"

"Yes," replied Stanford; "and strange and inconsistent though my conduct may appear to be, nothing whatever can alter that determination. The scorn with which the damsel has always treated me, and the affection which she lavishes upon the young sailor, Jack Junk, do but goad me on; and I swear that I will never rest until she is in my power, and safe on board this gallant bark!"

"Well said, captain," remarked Pierce; "there you spoke like

yourself, and I cannot but commend you for your resolution. Kate Markham will be the pride and ornament of the Black Raven. Oh where is one more worthy of becoming the pirate's bride? Her presence will urge us on to fresh deeds of daring; and henceforth the fame of the rover of the seas will become more widely spread over the world."

"The storm still howls with unabated fury," said Mark Stanford, after a pause; "it never before had such a powerful effect upon me. We cannot venture from the ship until it has abated."

"And why should we?" demanded Pierce; "are we not better where we are, surrounded by our brave crew, and ready for any danger that might threaten us?"

"True," coincided the captain; "but we have nothing to fear. We have long anchored in this port without suspicion, and, now the fleet has departed, we have less reason to apprehend danger than ever."

"Certainly," returned his companion; "besides, I suppose now that Jack Junk is out of the way, and you have got rid of this old Reuben of the Cliff, you will not delay the execution of your designs against Kate Markham any longer than possible?"

"No," answered Stanford; "I am all impatience until they are accomplished, and I have already made up my mind as to the means I will adopt to get the damsel in my power. There is no one, you know, resides with Kate Markham but her uncle and his daughter Constance. The house is situated in a secluded spot, and at some distance from any other habitation; so what can be more easy than to make an attack on it at night, and bear her away?"

"True," said Pierce; "we have every means to accomplish such a design, and it will be our own fault if we be discovered, or even suspected. In the darkness of night, Kate Markham can be borne with perfect safety on board this vessel, and then your triumph will be complete; but there is one thing I would suggest to you, and which seems to have escaped your mind."

"And what is that?" demanded Stanford.

"Should you retire from the farm immediately after the abduction of Kate, suspicion would naturally alight upon you."

"Why, that idea is reasonable enough," replied Mark, "and it has before occurred to me. At any rate, it will be desirable for me to remain at the farm for a day or two after the seizure of Kate, or

they will at once, as you say, conclude that I am the author of all that has taken place."

"Certainly," said Pierce; "moreover, it is necessary that we should be in readiness to set sail at a moment's warning. You had better give the lads the necessary instructions to be in readiness in case of any emergency."

"Yes," agreed Stanford, "and it was for that purpose that I came here to-night. However, they will need but little instruction from me; the daring crew of the Black Raven are always prepared to encounter any danger that may threaten them, and to surmount it. But come, we need some refreshment after the extraordinary and exciting events of the night; so let us rejoin our comrades, and endeavor to banish the effects of them until this tempest is abated, and we may gain the shore in safety."

To this proposition, of course, Pierce Raker could raise no objection, and they therefore rejoined the remainder of the pirates accordingly, to whom Mark Stanford briefly communicated his designs as regarded Kate, and instructed them to hold themselves in readiness for her reception on board, and be ready to sail at a moment's notice.

The ruffians all applauded the resolution of their captain, and in the most tumultuous manner they pledged the health of their inhuman chief, and his destined victim, and drank success to their future undertakings on the deep.

CHAPTER IV.

The body of Reuben of the Cliff discovered—The Consternation—The Determination of Mark Stanford and the Pirate Crew—The Night of Horror—Seizure of Kate and Fearful Death of Mr. Markham.

THE storm continued its ravages until the middle of the following day, when the wind lulled, the sun broke forth, and all became comparatively calm. It had been a terrible night for all who resided for miles along the coast; sleep had been a stranger to them, and many were the prayers that were offered up to the Most High for the preservation of the hardy sons of the ocean, who were exposed to all its terrors. Great were the fears that were entertained for the safety of the noble fleet that had sailed on the previous day; and young and old flocked to the beach in fearful anticipation of the sad havoc that might have been committed among the different vessels that were still anchored in the harbor; for such had been the terrible violence of the late tempest, that it would have been utterly impossible to have ventured to render any assistance, inevitable destruction threatening all those who might have been hardy enough to brave the horrors of the deep on such a frightful occasion.

Several of the vessels had been driven from their mooring, and were no where to be seen; while others had boldly braved the storm, and remained apparently comparatively but little injured; and amongst them shone the pirate vessel, the Black Raven, supposed to be the fair trader, the Enterprise.

The spirits of poor Kate gradually revived when she beheld the favorable change in the weather, and devoutly she offered up her prayers to heaven for the preservation of her lover, and in which she was most earnestly joined by her cousin, Constance. Old Joe

Trennant was early at the house of his friend Markham, and did his best to quiet the fears of all interested.

"It has been a rough night to be sure," remarked the old veteran; "and seldom in all the voyages I have made, have I witnessed such a storm. Many a brave fellow, I fear, has met with an ocean grave; it is a sad thought; but avast, avast, Joe, it is a noble death, and those who have met it are, I hope, moored in the haven of happiness. Come Kate, my pretty lass, now do not again be hoisting those signals of distress, but hold hard by the anchor of hope. Your lover, I trust, is quite safe, and will still be able to steer clear of the shoals of destruction."

Kate faintly smiled at the warmth of the honest old seaman; but her mind was still tormented with mingled hopes, doubts, and apprehensions, and it was a completely fruitless task for her to try to regain her wonted composure.

"I cannot remain here," she said; "let us wander to the beach, that we may gaze upon that deep which was the scene of so many terrors."

"What a strange and extravagant idea, my dear niece," observed Mr. Markham; "you had better abandon it; what good can result from that which must naturally create so many melancholy thoughts?"

"Do not refuse me, my dear Sir," said Kate, "for I feel an irresistible impulse to obey the dictates of my own heart; and something seems to whisper to me that I shall obtain some consolation in the contemplation of that vast deep on which my poor Jack has embarked his fate. Come, my uncle, Constance, and Mr. Trennant, you will accompany me; it may appear an extraordinary fancy, I am ready to admit, but, at least, do not refuse me from indulging in it."

Finding that it would be useless to attempt to dissuade her, and hoping that it might alleviate the anguish of her mind, Mr. Markham and the others no longer raised any objection, and issuing forth from the house, they made their way to the sea-beach. On arriving within sight of the cliffs upon which the hovel of the unfortunate and mysterious man, Reuben, was situated, Kate paused, and all the strange events that had occurred to her and Constance at their interview with him, rushed as fresh and vividly upon her memory as if they had only been enacted the present hour. She could not help

shuddering, and she turned very pale ; and her uncle, who immediately noticed her emotion, inquired the cause of it.

"Nothing, nothing, dear uncle," said the damsel, "it was only a weak and unaccountable sensation which suddenly came over me ; but it is at an end now. This is a wild and cheerless spot, and—"

"And yet," added Mr. Markham, "that very remarkable old man, Reuben of the Cliff, as he is called, has chosen to take up his residence here. It is stated by some persons that he is possessed of the gift of foresight, and can penetrate into the secrets of futurity. Poor old man, his intellect must be deranged, that is very certain ; however, from all that I have seen or heard of him, I believe he is perfectly harmless, and, therefore, I do not see why any person should interfere with his singular whims."

"Very true, sir," returned Kate ; "but let us proceed ; for, I confess, I feel a kind of dread while remaining on this wild spot."

Suddenly their attention was attracted by something that was being drifted on the surface of the ocean towards the shore, and on its approaching nearer, they perceived it was a long track of seaweed, in which the body of a human being seemed to be entangled, and was floating head uppermost. It was dashed more rapidly onwards, and at length a powerful wave washed it on the beach, immediately at the feet of Kate Markham and her friends. She uttered a faint scream of mingled astonishment and terror, and several of the other persons assembled, rushed to the spot, and stooping down, the ghastly and distorted features of the ill-fated Reuben of the Cliff, with his eyes wide open, revealed themselves to the horror-struck gaze of all present.

A deadly sickness came over our heroine, and she could not remove her eyes from the corpse ; but Mr. Markham and the others, examining it more minutely, beheld the frightful and gaping wounds in the side, and then the horrible fate which had befallen the old man, became perfectly apparent.

"A foul and cowardly murder has been committed," said Mr. Markham ; "what wretch or wretches have done this ?"

"Oh, horror !" gasped forth Kate ; "so soon, too, after—wretched old man ! could not thy gray hairs stay the hand of the inhuman assassin ?—I cannot gaze upon the ghastly and mutilated corpse. Oh, let us begone !—May Heaven visit those monsters who have perpetrated this hideous crime with its most terrible vengeance !"

She covered her face with her hands, to shut out the revolting sight, and the deepest anguish agitated her gentle and susceptible breast.

"Let the corpse of the ill-fated man be conveyed to his miserable hovel," said Mr. Markham, "and the proper authorities being informed of the circumstance, every inquiry must immediately be made, which may lead to the detection and punishment of the murderer or murderers."

Several of the persons assembled on the spot, who all expressed their horror, raised the mangled body from the earth, and in obedience to the instructions of Mr. Markham, conveyed it to the hovel which Reuben had occupied while living; and Mr. Markham and Constance, taking the arm of our heroine, supported her trembling form towards home; where, on arriving, it was sometime before she could recover from the shock her feelings had sustained.

The savage murder of poor old Reuben of the Cliff, caused the greatest sensation in the neighborhood, and every means that reason could suggest, was adopted to discover the atrocious assassin, but without any prospect of success; for such was the secrecy with which it had been perpetrated, that it was impossible for suspicion to alight on any one; and it seemed more than likely that the dreadful circumstance would ever remain involved in mystery. A strict search was made in the hovel, but nothing whatever was discovered which was calculated to lead to any idea as to who the old man really was, and what could be his motives for taking up so singular a course of life.

In the meantime Mark Stanford and the other pirates exulted in the thought of the impenetrable mystery that prevailed as to who were the real assassins of the unfortunate Reuben; and they felt perfectly satisfied that if they kept their own counsel, there was no possibility of its ever being discovered. But the guilty conscience of the monster, Stanford, was far from being at ease; and the dying words and ghastly looks of the murdered man continually haunted his imagination. He, however, determined to persevere in his diabolical designs against Kate Markham, and he had not the least doubt but that he would meet with all the success he could wish.

For the last few days he had not ventured much from the house, and had always most sedulously avoided the presence of Kate or her friends, so that suspicions of his intentions might be stifled; but he

lost not a moment in maturing his plans, and the time seemed now to be rapidly approaching, when he might safely put them into execution.

It was night, and Mark Stanford and his worthy colleague, Pierce, were seated together in one of the rooms before described, at the back of the house. This was about a fortnight after the departure of our hero, and the events taking place which we have described.

"There is no other way of accomplishing it, captain," observed Pierce, in continuation of the conversation : "to be crowned with success in any desperate undertaking, desperate and determined means must always be adopted. There is no chance of our being enabled to ensnare the girl into our power, and therefore our only way is, to seize her by a *coup de main*. One bold effort, and she is yours ; and once on board the Raven, we may set pursuit and discovery at defiance."

"True," said Stanford ; "and if we make an attack upon the house at midnight, there is no danger, I should think, of our being interrupted."

"Not the least," answered Pierce ; "if we can only manage to elude the preventive service, which, by common prudence and precaution, we can easily do. The house where Kate resides, is situated in the most lonely part, and there is no one but old Markham to protect her ; so, what chance is there of our plans being defeated ?"

"None that I see at present," said Mark. "I feel the greatest confidence in my triumph."

"Then the sooner we set about the execution of our plot, the better."

"Exactly so."

"But in order to carry out our scheme with safety, it will be necessary to delay the seizure of Kate for some time longer," remarked Pierce.

"Well, suppose we say a week from the present time ? A few days will not make such a vast deal of difference."

"Very true : be it so. That, then, is decided on."

"It is," replied Mark Stanford ; "and in the meantime, in order the better to forward my plot, I will play the hypocrite, visit old Markham in a friendly way, pretend to feel regret for my past boldness, solicit his forgiveness, and that of his fair niece, and bid them

farewell. Ha! ha! if that does not deceive them and remove suspicion from me, I don't know what will."

"Ay, captain," said Pierce, "it is well contrived, and I have not the least doubt that you will execute it with your usual ability."

The two villains, having thus arranged their infamous plans to their mutual satisfaction, after some further conversation, retired for the night.

Two or three days elapsed without any thing particular occurring, and the melancholy of Kate suffered but little abatement, though Constance and her father did all they could to console her, and inspire her with hope.

Kate and her cousin and Markham, were seated one afternoon in the parlor of their dwelling, when they were suddenly startled and surprised by the appearance of Mark Stanford, who they had hoped would never have the boldness to obtrude upon their society again. Immediately on his entrance Kate and her cousin arose from their seats, and courtseying coldly, they abruptly quitted the room. Stanford bit his lips, but concealed his chagrin as well as he could, and bowing to Mr. Markham with studied politeness, he inquired respectfully after his health. Mr. Markham returned a suitable reply, and then added:

"To what may I be indebted for the honor of this visit, Mr. Stanford?"

"The honor is mine, Mr. Markham," replied the pirate, with a gracious smile. "I have come to request a favor of you."

"A favor from me, sir?" said Mr. Markham, with a look of surprise.

"Yes, Mr. Markham," answered Stanford; "I have to request your patience while I explain myself."

"Proceed, sir," said Mr. Markham, rather impatiently.

"I need not inform you, Mr. Markham," continued Stanford, "that the great personal and intrinsic charms of your amiable niece, captivated my heart from the moment I beheld her, and——"

"Sir?" interrupted Mr. Markham, and rising, angrily.

"Bear with me, my dear sir, a few moments, I beg of you," returned Stanford, "and do not misunderstand me. I repeat, that I loved your niece, but her heart was unfortunately another's, and there was nothing left to me but despair; but still, so powerful was the passion that reigned within my breast, that I could not readily

resign my hopes: I confessed my love—was rejected; but still I ventured to prosecute my suit; in that I own I was wrong, very wrong—and it is for that I have to supplicate your forgiveness, and that of Miss Markham, your niece. From this time you nor she will never again receive any annoyance from me: circumstances have compelled me to dispose of the farm, and retire to a distant land. It is quite uncertain whether this country will ever behold me again; but, wherever I am, I assure you that I shall never cease to remember yourself, the amiable Kate, and her fair cousin, with the most unfeigned respect, and to feel the most poignant regret that I should ever have caused her, or any one connected with her, a moment's uneasiness."

Mr. Markham looked at him narrowly; his words surprised him but they were spoken with so much apparent sincerity, that he could not doubt him.

"Mr. Stanford," he remarked, "I accept your apology with the same frankness with which it appears to be given; and as it is a subject which cannot be altogether pleasing to either of us, we will say no more upon it. I bear you no ill-will; neither, I am certain, will my gentle niece do so, notwithstanding all that has taken place. I wish you prosperity, sir, wherever you may go."

"Thank you, Mr. Markham, for your kind wishes," returned Stanford, with the same assumption of respect; "my course is bent to a far-distant land—and, as it is not likely that we shall ever meet again, it will afford me much gratification to know that, at any rate, we do not part bad friends. May I request you to convey my sentiments to your amiable niece?"

"I will do so," answered Mr. Markham; "and I feel convinced that she will receive them with much satisfaction, and will bury the past in oblivion."

Mark Stanford again returned his acknowledgements, and, after a few more observations, he politely took his leave, secretly exulting at the success of his scheme, and the manner in which he had deceived Mr. Markham.

"The fool!" he muttered to himself, as he proceeded towards his home, "he little imagines the deep-laid scheme I have in contemplation; and that, so far from abandoning my designs against his niece, I have so matured my plans that she cannot possibly escape me. I go to a distant land, but Kate Markham shall be the com-

panion of my voyage; she shall become the pirate's mistress, and I will fully revenge myself for the scorn and hatred with which she has hitherto treated me. Jack Junk, should you ever return again to your native land, it will be to meet sorrow and disappointment. I triumph!"

Thus soliloquizing with himself, the villain reached his home where he found Raker anxiously awaiting him.

"Well, what success, captain?" he inquired.

"All that I could wish," replied Stanford. "I have played my cards with my usual skill, and old Markham is completely deceived."

Kate had now become more tranquil in her mind, though she could not help, at times, feeling some strange and sad presentiments that some misfortune was about to befall them, which they would find it impossible to avert.

"Why do you persist in encouraging such painful apprehensions, my dear cousin?" said Constance: "what danger should you fear? The only one whom you had cause to dread, was Stanford; but he is now far away, and I feel confident that he will never annoy you again. Come, come, arouse yourself, and endeavor to look forward to the future with hope and tranquillity."

"Alas, Constance," replied our heroine, "you may deem me weak and foolish, but indeed I find it impossible to conquer the melancholy feelings that have occupied my mind throughout the day. I fear to go to rest, for it seems to me as if some fearful calamity were impending over me, and which it will be totally impossible for me to avert. I wish to Heaven it was morning."

"How extraordinary and unaccountable this is," remarked Constance: "what danger should threaten you? Come, let us seek our pillow, and sleep will soon banish these gloomy ideas from your brain."

"No, Constance," returned our heroine; "I do not feel the least inclined for sleep; I will sit here till daylight."

"Would that I could persuade you," said Constance; "for, really, such ideas appear to me most unreasonable."

"They may appear so," said Kate; "but I find that it is completely useless for me to try to divest my mind of them. Hark! what noise was that below?"

"Nonsense, Kate!" replied her cousin; "you are suffering your imagination to deceive you. I heard nothing."

"Oh, I am certain I could not have been mistaken," returned our heroine, "it sounded like the hasty closing of a door below."

"It was nothing but the wind, depend upon it, which is certainly very high and boisterous. Come, come, arouse yourself."

Kate shook her head, and her countenance, which was very pale, showed plainly the emotions which tortured her bosom, and which gained strength every moment.

The storm which had so long threatened, now commenced with great violence; and the rain pattered loudly against the windows; and the wind blew so violently, that it shook the very house to its foundation. Kate kept imagining she heard strange noises proceeding from below—and her apprehensions became at last so powerful, that she almost dreaded to look around her.

"Would that my uncle had not retired to rest," she said; "or that the morning was here. Something terrible, I feel convinced, is about to happen."

"Ridiculous!" said Constance; "I really shall lose all patience with you, my dear Kate, if you thus persist in giving way to such idle and groundless fears."

"Hist! hist!" ejaculated her cousin, in a faint voice, and suddenly laying her hand upon her arm. "There! there!—did you not hear that?"

"I heard nothing but the wind," replied Constance.

"Oh, no," gasped forth Kate, "I am certain I was not mistaken. It sounded like the suppressed mutterings of human voices, and the cautious treadings of footsteps on the stairs. There again—you must hear that."

Constance did, indeed, at that moment distinctly hear sounds such as Kate described; and they clung together, and held their breath, in a state of great alarm and astonishment. Louder and louder the sounds became, and they appeared to be immediately outside the door. Worked up to a pitch of the greatest terror, the fair cousins uttered a simultaneous scream, and the next instant the door was burst open, and several of the pirates, wearing black masks, and all armed, appeared on the threshold.

"Cease your cries, for they are useless!" exclaimed the well-known voice of Mark Stanford, seizing the horror-struck Kate in

his arms: "resistance is in vain. Constance Markham, the prize I seek is your fair, though scornful cousin, and not you! Away lads, and leave the other girl to console her father for his loss! Mark Stanford's moment of triumph has arrived, and in another hour the lovely Kate shall be on board his gallant pirate barque!"

"Oh, help!—help!" shrieked Constance; "monsters! release your senseless victim, or the vengeance of Heaven will overtake you, even unprotected though we are!"

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed Stanford, scornfully; "I heed not your threats, weak girl; and you may think yourself fortunate that I do not desire you to accompany us. But we waste time. Quick, my lads, quick!"

Poor Kate had fainted, and Constance was now so overpowered with horror that she also sank on the floor, insensible. Stanford, throwing the light and graceful form of his intended victim across his shoulder quitted the room, followed by Pierce and the other pirates, and hastily descended the stairs towards the back of the house, at which they had effected their entrance; but the noise had aroused Mr. Markham, who, unfortunately, at that moment made his appearance in his dressing-gown on the landing; and, on beholding the pirates, and the insensible form of his niece, he started back a few paces in terror and amazement; but he recovered himself in an instant, and, rushing desperately on Stanford, he exclaimed—

"Villain! miscreant! midnight robber! and assassin!—release this innocent girl, or my cries shall rend the air, and——"

"Madman!" interrupted Mark Stanford, in a savage voice, "stand back, and do not offer a fruitless resistance—or take the consequences!"

"Ah, Mark Stanford," cried the old man, "is it you? Ah, wretch! wretch!—but I will resist your diabolical purpose, however feeble my arm may be!"

As he thus spoke, he again rushed on the pirate, and endeavored to seize him by the throat.

"Headstrong fool!" shouted Pierce, "are you determined to brave your fate? Then take the consequences!"

"Hold! hold!" cried Stanford; "take not his life, but secure him and stop his noise."

He spoke too late, however, for at that instant the miscreant Pierce dealt the unfortunate Mr. Markham a terrible blow with his

sword upon the head, and he sank bleeding and insensible upon the floor.

"By h—l! you have slain him!" exclaimed Mark Stanford; "this is cursed unfortunate. But away! and let us make all speed to the place where the boat awaits to carry us on board."

He rushed down the stairs as he thus spoke, still bearing the insensible Kate in his arms, and, followed by Pierce and the other pirates, soon emerged from the house. The coast was quite clear, and the ruffians hurried on with the greatest rapidity, and were soon far beyond the spot.

"Fortune be praised!" ejaculated Stanford, as they proceeded; "I triumph! The girl is mine, and nothing can again rescue her from my power; but I would that you had not been so hasty, Pierce; I would that the old man's life had been spared."

"He brought his fate upon himself by his obstinacy," answered Pierce; "and what's the use of regretting it now? But, perhaps after all, he may not be dead."

"I hope not," said Stanford; "but quick, while the girl still remains insensible."

Pierce made no reply, and they pursued their way with increased speed, and totally regardless of the fury of the battling elements. Having arrived at the rocks, they made their way through an opening to the beach, where the boat was moored ready to convey them to the pirate vessel. In two or three minutes they were dashing rapidly over the deep, and at length the boat came alongside the ship, and they all got safely on board, where they were welcomed by the shouts of the pirates. Stanford conveyed the insensible form of his destined victim to a cabin which had been prepared for her reception, and, having kissed the poor girl rapturously, he left her in charge of a female, and returned on deck to give orders for the anchor to be weighed immediately. In less than a quarter of an hour, all was ready, and the pirate vessel was dashing swiftly, like a gigantic bird of ill-omen, over the deep.

"Hurrah!" shouted the pirate chief, throwing aside his disguise, and appearing in his true character. "Hugh Granfield is again upon his native element, proud and triumphant! Kate Markham, you are now the mistress of the buccaneer, and must learn to submit to no other will but his. Rejoice, my lads; shout long life and prosperity to your captain and his lovely mate!"

The rude and boisterous shouts of the daring crew of the Black Raven rent the air, and Mark Stanford allowed them to give free indulgence to their hilarity. The motion of the vessel, and the noise of the crew, at length aroused Kate, and opening her eyes and starting to her feet, she gazed with astonishment and horror around her.

"God of heaven!" she exclaimed, clasping her aching temples; "what is the meaning of this? Where am I? Where are my friends, and what has brought me hither?"

The woman, in whose care she had been left, now advanced towards her, but Kate started back, alarmed at the sight of her, and in frantic accents repeated her questions.

"Why, Miss Markham," replied the woman, "for that is your name, I believe, I should think it would not take you much trouble to discover that you are on board a ship, and as gallant a vessel as ever stemmed the wave. The Black Raven must be your future home, and the rover of the seas, he whom you have hitherto known only as Farmer Stanford, claims you for his mistress!"

No sooner did the unfortunate damsel hear the terrible announcement, than she gave utterance to a piercing shriek, and again became insensible.

CHAPTER V

The Catastrophe.—Distraction of Constance.—Kate on board the Pirate.

RETURN we now to the scene where the monstrous outrage we have been describing was perpetrated. It was not until several minutes after the departure of the pirates with their unfortunate victim, that Constance was awakened to consciousness; and her brain was then tortured to madness as the dreadful truth flashed upon her memory, and she found herself alone. Screaming aloud for help, and calling upon the name of her cousin, she rushed from the chamber, and made her way down the stairs till she came to the landing, when the bleeding form of her unfortunate parent met her appalled sight; and, with a loud cry of horror, she sank upon the floor by his side, and once more her senses left her. It was some time before she recovered; and with what feelings of distraction and horror did she then raise the form of her father and gaze upon his ghastly, blood-stained countenance.

"Father! father!" she groaned; "oh, speak to me!--Almighty God! the monsters have murdered him!"

She pressed the poor man in her arms, and eagerly laid her hand upon his breast; but she could not feel it beat; and life appeared to be quite extinct.

"Horror! horror!" she exclaimed, in delirious accents; "he is no more! the fiends have slain him! and I am a friendless, wretched orphan! Heaven, I invoke your most terrible retribution for this frightful, this hideous crime!--Father! dear father! wilt thou never speak to me again?—I shall go mad—Oh, God! this trial is surely too severe!"

She started, and uttered a mingled exclamation of hope and fear, for at that moment a faint groan escaped the bosom of her father, and he opened his eyes and fixed them upon her with such an expression of pity and regret, as she could never forget.

"Ah! all merciful Heaven!" she cried, "I thank thee.—He still lives!—Father, dear unfortunate father, but one word! oh, let your poor child but hear you speak again, and appease the horror that distracts my soul!"

He made several painful efforts to speak, but in vain—it was too late; the dew of death already moistened his brow; his eyes grew dim! he pressed the hand of his daughter convulsively, breathed one groan of agony, and sank back a corpse. A frightful shriek of agony and despair, which might have been heard far around, burst from the lips of Constance; her brain swam round; her limbs tottered under her, and she fell by the side of the corpse, totally unconscious. Morning dawned, and still the poor girl remained in the same stupor; and it did not seem likely that she would ever recover again; and it was not till old Joe Trennant came to the house to pay his customary morning visit, that the dreadful occurrence was discovered. We need not attempt to describe the horror of the kind hearted old veteran at the ghastly sight; and it was not till after the lapse of a few minutes, that he could recover himself sufficiently to decide how to act.

"My poor old friend dead—murdered!" he faltered out, in a broken voice: "can I believe my eyes? or is it only some frightful dream? What monster in human form has done this? Poor girl, it will be the death of her.—But where is Kate—the pretty, innocent Kate? Ah! what strange fear is this that suddenly comes over me? Kate, my lass, why are you not here? Kit Breezely! messmates! all, why do you not come to my assistance? I—I—oh, shiver my timbers! if I couldn't cry like a lubberly boy."

He drew the cuff of his coat across his eyes; and for a few moments he could not move or give utterance to a syllable; but at length he raised the insensible form of poor Constance from the floor and conveyed her into the apartment, placing her on a sofa. He, then, with a heavy heart, also removed the body of his ill-fated friend into another room, and rushed frantically over the house, calling upon the name of Kate; but his anguish and despair were almost insupportable, when he discovered that she was not there.

"It is clear enough," he said ; "some infernal villains have borne down upon the poor girl, forced her from her moorings, and her poor uncle has lost his life in attempting to defend her. I am taken all aback. I—I—shall go mad ! Let me alarm the neighborhood, and see whether we cannot overhaul this terrible mystery. Oh, Jack, my poor lad, what would be your anguish, did you but know what has taken place !"

He rushed out of the house, and made his way with all the speed he could to the inn, in order that he might make old Kit acquainted with the dreadful event ; and the consternation of Kit and every body else who heard it may be readily imagined. Old Joe was accompanied back to the house by Breezely and several others, and the utmost horror was expressed by every one at the ghastly sight which presented itself. Constance was still in the same state of unconsciousness as she was when Joe Trennant first discovered her and her father ; but a person was immediately dispatched for the assistance of a medical man, who immediately announced that Mr. Markham must have been dead for some time ; and he then used his best exertions to restore poor Constance to sensibility, for they were all anxiety until they heard from her lips an explanation of the awful circumstance. Some time, however, elapsed before any visible effects attended the doctor's efforts, and the whole of the parties present were in a state of the most painful suspense and apprehension, lest the shock the poor girl had sustained from the dreadful and unexpected calamity, might prove too much for her strength to support ; but at length a deep sigh escaped her bosom, and gave token of returning life. In another moment she opened her eyes, and gazed wildly and vacantly around upon the individuals present. Poor old Joe Trennant approached her with the kindness of a parent, and taking her hand, in a voice of the greatest gentleness and sympathy, he said :

"Cheer thee, cheer thee, my poor lass ; you are surrounded by your friends, and ——"

Constance started at the sound of his voice, and interrupting him, exclaimed :

"Ah ! who are you that thus addresses me ? Where am I ? Why am I thus surrounded ? Who are you all ? Oh, horror ! I remember now ! Father ! father ! Monsters ! they have torn you from me ! It is in vain to attempt to deceive me ! I pressed his

lifeless, mangled corpse in my arms! I saw the clotted blood upon his brow! They have murdered him! Father, father! Oh, God! Oh,———”

She could say no more, but with a fearful shriek she again sank insensible upon the sofa.

“Unfortunate girl,” remarked Trennant, “this awful blow will prove too much for her. She will never be able to survive so frightful a catastrophe. Kate Markham, too; oh, what has become of her? The monsters who have done this will surely be visited with the most terrible retribution of heaven!”

Every one present looked on for a few moments in a state of the greatest consternation, but at length the doctor advised the removal of Constance to her chamber, where she was left in the charge of himself and two of the females, and all the authorities of the district were made acquainted with the dreadful particulars, so that every prompt search might be made after the perpetrators of so atrocious an outrage.

We need not describe the painful sensation which was created in the vicinity, as soon as the frightful event became generally known, and every exertion was immediately made which might lead to any discovery, but at present with little prospect of success. The house was strictly examined, and from the imprint of several feet on the stairs and on the ground attached to the house, it was quickly concluded that there had been an attack made upon it by ruffians, who had seized our heroine and borne her away, and savagely murdered her ill-fated uncle in a fruitless attempt to resist them. What created no little astonishment, too, was the sudden and unexpected disappearance of the *Enterprise* in the night. Suspicion almost immediately fell upon Mark Stanford, and a strict search was made at the farm; but nothing was there elicited which was calculated to throw the least light upon the mysterious and awful subject which cast an universal gloom over the neighborhood.

For two days poor Constance remained in a state of torpor, and the doctor despaired of her recovery; and when at last a change took place, it was found that her senses wandered; she raved wildly, but sufficient could be gathered from what she said, to confirm their suspicions that the miscreant, Stanford, was the author of this hideous outrage, and also that the unfortunate Kate had fallen into his power. It was likewise strongly suspected that he was in some way

connected with the *Enterprise*, which had made its disappearance from the harbor; and all these various conjectures kept up the excitement to such an intolerable degree, that it became perfectly painful.

What a painful change had a few short days wrought in the neighborhood! Jack Junk was far away, encountering all the perils of the deep; the fair girl whom he so ardently loved, was torn from her home, and taken (Heaven only knows whither); the ill-fated Mr. Markham had met with a cruel and untimely death, while poor Constance was in the most deplorable state that it was possible for any person to be. The desolating hand of Fate had indeed dealt a terrible blow, and the heaviest gloom prevailed around. The most unremitting exertions were, however, continued to be made to discover the fate of Kate, but all to no purpose; not the least clue could be obtained, although, when all the circumstances were taken into consideration—that she was in the power of the villain, Mark Stanford, was generally believed; and it was feared that she would thus be irrecoverably lost.

The first day, Kate Markham remained in the same state of stupefaction, but not at all to the surprise of the pirate captain; although he could not but feel somewhat alarmed lest the terror of the seizure, and the prospect of the fate that was in store for her, might prove too much for her strength to support. He paid her frequent visits during the day, and as he gazed upon her pale but lovely features, and reflected that she was now entirely at his mercy, his exultation knew no bounds. Often did the villain dare to pollute her lips with his unholy kisses; and as he continued to feast his eyes upon her matchless charms, his disgusting passion every moment increased.

“Proud, scornful beauty!” he ejaculated; “who triumphs now—the pirate captain, or his favored rival? And yet, I would much rather that Raker had not been so hasty in the desperate blow he dealt her uncle, which, I am afraid, has proved fatal.”

Again he pressed the warmest kisses upon the lips of the unconscious damsel, and then once more summoning the attendance of the female, he left poor Kate in her care, and quitted the cabin.

The weather continued any thing but favorable, and the piracy made but indifferent progress, and contrary winds arising, she was driven completely out of her course, much to the annoyance of

Stanford. He paced the quarter-deck impatiently, giving his orders in a hurried and disturbed manner, casting his eyes anxiously over the ocean, and muttering curses to himself at intervals, although he saw nothing particularly to alarm him. Pierce Raker at length joined him, and they entered into conversation together.

"It is d——d unfortunate!" observed Stanford; "the Black Raven makes no way at all; and unless the wind changes, it will be a long time before we shall be likely to reach our place of destination."

"Oh, fear not, captain," replied Raker; "it strikes me forcibly that we shall not long be exposed to these contrary winds; besides, we have got good sea-room, and have nothing to apprehend. But, how fares your lovely prize?"

"Why," answered Stanford, "she is much in the same condition, and she does not seem likely to recover very soon."

It was long after midnight that our heroine was completely restored to consciousness, and she then found herself alone, and reclining on a sofa, which had been fixed for her accommodation.

"God of Heaven!" she ejaculated, "oh, watch over and protect me, I beseech thee—for without thy merciful interposition, I am lost!" She groaned bitterly in her despair, and then screamed aloud for help, but no answer was returned to her cries, and the hollow murmuring of the waves seemed to mock her sufferings. But, at length, completely worn out with the intensity of her anguish, she sank back on her seat, and again fell into a kind of stupor of forgetfulness, which, perhaps, under the horror of the circumstances in which she was placed, was a mercy to her.

How long she remained in this situation, she had no means of judging; but at length she was aroused, by hearing some person at the door of the cabin in which she was confined; and directly afterwards it was thrown open, and the female before mentioned entered, bringing with her some provisions and a portion of wine. Kate started on beholding her, and looked eagerly upon her, but she could not speak—and the woman, after looking attentively at her for a few moments, said—

"I am glad to see that you have recovered, and are looking so much better—and no doubt our captain will be equally gratified when he is made acquainted with it. You had better partake of these refreshments, for you must need them after your long abstinence."

"Oh, God!" ejaculated our heroine, in a faint voice; "it is too true then that I am a prisoner on the perilous deep, and by this time far away from my home and those kind friends who are so dear to me."

"You have guessed perfectly right," replied the female; "and so you may as well make your mind contented, as you cannot help yourself."

"What is the name of the vessel in which I am?" demanded Kate, in a tremulous voice; "and who is the villain who has thus dared to commit so brutal an outrage against an innocent and unprotected girl? Speak, I conjure you, for certainty is far less terrible than this awful state of suspense!"

"This vessel is the pretended fair-trader, the 'Enterprise,' answered the woman; "but as you are anxious to know its real name, I do not scruple to inform you, that it is the much-dreaded 'Black Raven,' which has long ruled the empire of the seas: its captain, whom you have hitherto known and despised as Farmer Stanford, is no other than Hugh Granfield, the Pirate Chief, whose name has ever struck awe and terror into the minds of all who have heard it."

"Oh, horror!" groaned our heroine, covering her face with her hands, and trembling all over; "what have I done? why has Heaven reserved me for such a hideous fate as this? But it cannot be; the thought is too monstrous to entertain. Great God! upon thy mercy I throw myself, and will not, cannot believe, that thou wilt permit my brutal enemy to triumph!"

She looked up when she had given utterance to these words, and, to her astonishment, beheld that the female was gone, and that she was left to all the anguish of her own thoughts. What language could do adequate justice to them? She clasped her hands vehemently together, and the most violent sobs escaped her bosom; then she threw herself upon the sofa, and for some time became completely absorbed in the intensity of her grief and despair.

"It is all over!" she sighed, at length; "the cup of my misery is filled to the brim, and a fate far more terrible than the most torturing of deaths is in store for me! In the power of the fearful Pirate Chief! Gracious Heaven! can it be true, or do my disordered senses only deceive me? Alas, alas! and are there no means of escaping from the fate with which I am threatened? Alas, no! here on the boundless deep, and in the power of such desperate

wretches, there is not the least hope for me. Beloved friends, farewell forever! we shall never, never meet again!"

The violence of her grief and anguish choked her further utterance—and again covering her face with her hands, she gave herself up to despair. In this manner two or three hours of the most indescribable misery passed away, when poor Kate was once more startled from her lethargy by hearing the door of the cabin unfastened, and the next moment the much-dreaded pirate captain stood before her appalled gaze, in his true character, and with a smile of triumph upon his repulsive features. The unfortunate damsel could not help uttering a cry of horror on beholding him, and shrank, trembling, to the remotest corner of the cabin. Stanford, however, nothing daunted or abashed by the reception she gave him, and which he had fully anticipated, advanced boldly towards her, and even attempted to take her hand; but had a serpent stung her, she could not have recoiled with greater terror or disgust; and, unable to meet the gaze of the villain, she averted her eyes, and awaited the result of this visit, in a state of the most agonizing suspense.

"So, beautiful Kate," began the pirate, "at length we meet under those circumstances I have so long been anxious for. My hopes are realized—my wishes will soon be gratified to their fullest extent. Here there is no one to interrupt me in the prosecution of that suit which you scornfully rejected. Farmer Stanford, alias Hugh Granfield, the Pirate Chief, bids you welcome to his gallant barque; he salutes his future mistress with a proud and exulting heart. The blue waves are below us—the clear sky above us—favoring winds waft us to a far-distant land, where no eye can discover you or rescue you from my power. I'm afloat! I'm afloat! and the Rover is free!"

"Look down upon me, oh, Heaven!" cried our heroine, clasping her hands, "and guard me from this monster in human form!"

"Kate Markham," replied Stanford, in a determined voice, "this is no time for useless prayers or invocations; the pirate captain is not the man on whom they are likely to have the least effect; fate has made you mine; henceforth you must learn to love me as your future lord and master! Mark me, girl, you have no weak or irresolute boy to tamper with, but one who was never yet known to be defeated in his designs. But think not that the heart of the daring rover of the seas is insensible to the influence of beauty. No, he is

prepared to lavish upon you such a passion as never yet ruled the breast of man. You shall be the most affectionate object of his soul—his goddess—his queen ! Away, then, with these feelings of pride and scorn, and yield submissively to that will it would be useless for you to oppose. The pirate claims his mistress—and who shall dare dispute his right ?”

“ Hold ! hold, heartless man, if such I may indeed call you, unless you would see me a corpse at your feet !” cried our heroine, still more terrified by the boldness and determination of his manner : “ when I think of all the awful and sanguinary crimes you have perpetrated, I cannot even gaze upon you without a shudder. Alas ! I know too well that I am in your power, and how little I have to expect from your mercy ; but I will not yield myself up entirely to despair. I feel myself strong in conscious innocence and virtue : and, putting my trust in the goodness of the Supreme—whose laws you have so monstrously outraged—I will still set your boasted power at defiance !”

“ What a pity it is,” replied Stanford, with a bitter sneer, “ that such fondly-expressed hopes should be doomed to be disappointed ; what folly it is that one so lovely should thus waste her time in offering this useless opposition. Damsel, here my will is supreme—and who was ever yet known to be bold enough to resist it ? Remember, that in Hugh Granfield, the pirate chief, you have no boy like Jack Junk to tamper with, but a man of determination, who never yet gave utterance to a word but what he meant to carry out to the very letter.”

“ Oh, horrible !” groaned the terrified maiden ; “ must I be sacrificed to such a monster as this ?”

“ I can bear with your epithets, sweet Kate Markham,” returned Stanford, with an ironical smile ; “ they do but serve to amuse me ; they are no more than I fully expected ; in fact, I enjoy them ; methinks you look even prettier in your anger, than your smiles, fascinating even though they are : but, my lovely Kate, why thus take such pains to make yourself wretched, since you cannot possibly combat with the fate which is marked out for you ? A proud position is offered to you : I am sovereign of the seas ; all have hitherto been compelled to acknowledge and succumb to my power. I have chosen you my queen ! The ‘ Black Raven ’ is our palace ; and the measureless water of the deep, our dominions ; and thus with this

fond embrace, this kiss of transport and of love, do I seal the compact!"

As the daring villain gave utterance to these fearful words, he darted towards our heroine, and endeavored to fold her in his arms; but she retreated to the further end of the cabin, and, by the dignity of her demeanor, for a few moments held him at defiance.

"Hold! miscreant!" she exclaimed, in a voice of firmness.—"Spirit of my father, now in Heaven! thy poor child humbly beseeches thee to look down upon her in this hour of danger, and to supplicate the merciful interposition of the Supreme to save her from the brutal designs of the monster who holds her in his power!"

A sudden change came over the pirate as she gave utterance to these words: he stared back aghast, as if he had encountered some fearful object: his limbs trembled in every joint; his face was bloodless; his lips quivered; his eyes seemed ready to start from their sockets, and stared upon vacancy; and his whole demeanor was that of a man who had just been convicted at the bar of a most hideous and horrible crime. Even Kate herself gazed at him, amazed and almost incredulous.

"Fiends of hell!" he at length exclaimed, in a hoarse voice, "what could have suggested these words to you, girl? Who could have told you that?—but I rave! What madness is this that seizes upon my brain! D—n! shall the dead rise again to confront me? He is there! I see him now as plainly as when—oh, horror!"

Was it merely the effect of the murderer's guilty conscience, or was it reality? but at that moment he imagined he beheld the awful form of the murdered Horace Markham, the father of his destined victim, standing between him and her, his glassy eyes and ghastly features fixed full upon him, and his long, bony fingers pointed towards him. The assassin for a few moments stood appalled; his lips moved, but they could give utterance to no sound; and at length, without venturing to cast another glance towards our heroine, or to speak a word, he rushed hurriedly from the cabin, and closed the door, leaving Kate in a state of the utmost amazement and alarm. In this manner he made his way upon deck, when his lieutenant, Pierce, joined him.

"'Tis a sullen night, captain," said Pierce; "our ship wears heavily, and, from the appearance of yon star, which alone peeps out from the ocean of clouds upon the black horizon, we shall have

a tempest ere long. But, how is this! Why do you look so gloomy and so reflective?"

"Pierce," answered Stanford, "I feel sad at heart."

"Sad at heart!" repeated Pierce. "What, from the reception you met with, I suppose, from the damsel herself. Ha! ha! ha! One of the tricks of the fair craft! Depend on it, she loves you, sir, only she has her own peculiar way of showing it; at any rate you have her under your command, and if you do not make her obey orders, it is your own fault, that's all I can say about it."

"Ay, she is beautiful," said Stanford, in a half abstracted manner; "but yet how has she been won? Look! look, Pierce! do you not see that star, how it bursts through the dense mist of clouds, and shows a lumen on the ocean?—do you not see it, man, like a will-o'-the-wisp?—it dances above and around our vessel; and now it sinks over the surface like a comet descended from the heavens, bearing blood in its track! I'm faint; Pierce—I'm sick!"

"Pardon me, captain," said Pierce; "but, if I may form a just opinion from your language, you seem to be going mad. What has caused this strange and cowardly, nervous feeling to come over you?"

"I saw him, Pierce; there is nothing will convince me to the contrary."

"Saw him—who?"

"The last murdered!"

"Pshaw!"

"Don't treat it indifferently; I saw him, I tell you, again, and his brother too. Horace Markham's shade interposed between me and his daughter, while that of his brother stood by his side, and—"

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed the pirate, ironically; "a good joke!"

"Pierce!" said Stanford, partially recovering himself, and fixing upon his lieutenant a stern look, "this is no trifling; if you value my favor or my friendship, you will not treat with idle levity that which I again solemnly protest to be true. I saw them both as plainly as when they appeared in life; and then, when I rushed away from the spot, turning my head from the bows, as if by some inscrutable, uncontrollable power, I beheld the ghastly and blood-stained countenance of Reuben of the Cliff."

"Ha! ha! ha!"

"Again you laugh!" said Mark Stanford; "but you, even you, will be convinced it is no idle delusion, ere long."

Pierce did not offer to interrupt him, but retained his position and watched him steadfastly. Suddenly he was startled by an exclamation of horror from Stanford, and, at the same moment, a supernatural light seemed to surround the vessel, and cast its reflection far over the wild waters of the deep. The expression of Mark Stanford's countenance, under the sickly reflection of the strange and unaccountable light, was ghastly in the extreme.

"Why, how now, captain?" demanded Pierce, approaching him; "why do you fix your gaze so intently upon one particular spot?"

"By h—l!" answered Stanford, in a hollow voice, while he pointed with his hand over the ocean; "there can be no delusion in this!"

"What do you mean?"

"Do you not see?"

"See what?—I see nothing but an aurora borealis, and a good friend it may be to us, for that single star formed but a faint lamp to light us on our course."

"No—no—no!" ejaculated the pirate captain, trembling more violently than before, and still keeping his eyes fixed upon the same spot; "not that, not that!—Pierce, are you not blind! or do you pretend to be so in order to torture me?"

"Torture you?"

"Yes, yes!—'tis there!—by all the infernal host, 'tis there!"

"What madness is this?"

"No—no—'tis not madness! You must be blind if you do not see it; and—and—it is coming this way!"

"What is coming this way?" again demanded Pierce; "you speak in riddles."

"There! there!" replied Stanford; "is it not as clear as the sun at noon-day? The ghastly countenance of the murdered man, Reuben of the Cliff—the same as it appeared shortly after you had consigned his body to the deep! By h—l! he has kept his word!"

Startled by the words of Stanford, and the earnestness of his manner, Pierce gazed more steadfastly towards that part of the ocean to which he indicated; and as he did so, an exclamation of mingled surprise and horror escaped him, and he became scarcely less agitated than the captain. Could it be fancy, or only the workings of a guilty conscience? No—it was there—the corpse of old

Reuben of the Cliff—drifting upright towards the vessel, as palpable as the most incontrovertible fact could appear to be—the ghastly countenance and glaring glassy eyes distinctly shown in the broad and sickly glare of the supernatural light.

“Demons of h—l!” cried Pierce, “what bitter mockery is this? If the graves yield up their ghastly tenants, shall not the waters of the deep cover their mutilated remains? Our senses must be leaving us!”

“Ha! ha! you do see him, then!” said Mark Stanford, in hoarse and frightful tones. “It is no wild illusion of the disordered brain, then?—Horror! horror! he approaches this way! He has kept his word—he has kept his word! The murdered victim pursues his cowardly assassins, and will do so to the day of judgment!”

The villains clung to each other with all the terror and cowardice that their guilty imaginations had conjured up, and continued with their eyes fixed upon the awful phantom. On—on it came—the head erect, the countenance plainly visible, and the sepulchral glance never removed from their blanched and quivering faces. The murmuring of the waves seemed to be hushed, the strange light grew stronger. Mark Stanford and his guilty companion could not speak—they could not stir; a hollow wailing sound struck their ears—the spectre drifted past the vessel—the supernatural light faded away, and all was darkness and obscurity.

“The fiends have conspired against us,” at length stammered out Stanford. “Pierce, can you now be bold enough to assert that I am mad? that I was deceived? You saw him—I know you did! Your pale face and trembling limbs convince me of it.”

“’Tis strange! ’tis unaccountable! almost past belief!” muttered Pierce.

“Past belief!” repeated Stanford, “that is impossible. The dying words of Reuben of the Cliff are fulfilled. Why did you not stay your accursed hand when I commanded you?”

“What!” replied Pierce, sternly, “and by so doing consign us all to the gallows. Bah! this is weakness. We have allowed our dis-tempered imaginations to deceive us, and must not give way to such fancies.”

“Fancies, fool! You saw him as plainly as I did, and why seek to deny it?”

“Come, let us below,” urged Pierce, “and endeavor to conquer

this womanish feeling. Some sickly delusion has wrought upon our imaginations."

"'Tis false! 'tis you who would seek to deceive me and yourself," returned Stanford; "your fears are equal to my own."

"What folly this is!"

"Well let us drop the subject, and banish from our minds what has taken place. Now that Kate Markham is entirely in my power, I am resolved not to delay the execution of my designs. Good-night."

"Good-night," repeated Pierce, and they separated.

Kate Markham, after the interview which had taken place between herself and Stanford, gave up almost entirely to despair. The woman who was deputed to attend on her, made her appearance with provisions, but Kate was too sick at heart to talk with her, and she quickly retired.

Not long, however, was she permitted to remain alone, for the cabin-door was suddenly thrown open, and the pirate chief stood before her.

"Fair Kate," said he, "your slave and admirer again comes to pay the homage of his love and devotion at the shrine of your beauty. I have chosen you for the empress of my heart, and as you are completely in my power, you must learn to look upon me as your future lord."

"Brutal man!" exclaimed Kate, shrinking from his touch, "I know too well that I am entirely in your power and at your mercy; but there is One above who will throw the shield of his Almighty protection around me, and who will not suffer you to triumph in your diabolical designs."

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed the pirate, "we shall see how far your sanguine hopes will be realized. Did I not tell you and the proud boy to whom you have devoted your affections, that Farmer Stanford's hour of triumph would quickly arrive, and have I not kept my promise?"

"Horrible!" ejaculated Kate; "will nothing interpose and save me from this awful fate?"

"Nothing, beauteous damsel," exultingly replied Stanford; "of that you may rest assured. Away, then, with your doubts and fears, and yield yourself entirely to love and happiness."

"Away," cried our heroine; "do not blaspheme the sacred name of love."

"By all my nopes," exclaimed the pirate, "I will yet conquer your proud and scornful spirit. The pirate chief, whose name has spread terror over the whole expanse of ocean, claims you for his future mistress, and by this fond embrace, this rapturous kiss, he seals the compact."

As the miscreant thus spoke, he encircled the lovely form of Kate Markham in his rude embrace, and, in spite of her screams, imprinted on her guileless lips a kiss.

"Monster!" cried Kate, releasing herself from him; "begone, and no longer trouble me!"

Stanford left the cabin, saying, "For the present, farewell. Tomorrow we meet again."

CHAPTER VI.

Jack Junk again.—The Shipwreck.—The Island.—The Maniac.

THE fleet, with which we left our hero, experienced very disastrous weather. The tempest raged with violence, and as soon as the storm abated, a dense fog arose, and the vessels were separated, and lost hail of each other.

The Defiance battled bravely, but she was driven completely out of her latitude, and, to add to the horror of those on board, sprung a leak. To penetrate the mist was impossible, and they were driven entirely at the mercy of the waves, threatened every moment with destruction. During the whole night, Jack Junk maintained the utmost coolness and determination; and wherever the greatest peril was to be encountered—wherever courage and skill were necessary to overcome a difficulty, there was Jack sure to be found. But, notwithstanding all their efforts, the leak increased; and about midnight the Defiance struck on a rock, and it was evident she was sinking. A large portion of the crew leaped into the boats, which were quickly launched, and in a short time the Defiance went down, carrying with her all who had remained on board.

It seemed almost impossible for a boat to live in such a storm, as

each wave that swelled over them filled the boat with water, and in less than an hour after the vessel went down, our hero found himself struggling desperately for life, his unfortunate companions gone. He breasted the waves manfully and gained a rock, to which he clung, and, clambering up beyond the reach of the waves, he sank overpowered and senseless.

How long he remained thus, he had no means of ascertaining, but the storm had entirely subsided; and, climbing to the top of the rock, he found himself upon an island, and, casting his eyes around, he was almost certain he saw the form of a man in the distance, but it vanished behind a cluster of trees. Hurrying on towards the spot, he found a rude hut.

"Thank God!" exclaimed the young seaman, "I am not entirely alone."

He walked towards the hut, within which all was perfectly still; and, imagining its owner was absent, opened the door and entered. On the table was some dried fish, a jug of water, and a quantity of fruit. Jack seated himself and partook greedily. Half an hour passed, when Jack was startled at hearing some one at the door, and concealing himself, a being entered, whose wild and singular appearance filled the mind of our hero with astonishment.

He looked anxiously around his apartment a few minutes, and approaching the table and beholding the decrease in the provisions he had left, he gave utterance to an exclamation of astonishment. After this, he knelt down before a crucifix, giving Jack an opportunity of observing his features, which were handsome and expressive, yet there was a wildness, a restlessness in the eyes, which plainly indicated the wandering of the mind. The features of the man struck our hero as those of some individual he had seen before, but where he could not tell. At last he recollected the locket which old Joe Trennant had presented him, and which was still suspended to his neck, and, looking at it, was astonished at the resemblance between it and the recluse.

The strange being continued on his knees for some time, then rising, folded his arms across his chest, and spoke,—

"My Emilia! shall I ever again behold you, or your innocent babe? Alas, no! you have perished; while I, the primary cause of all this misery, upon whose brow is stamped more than the guilt of Cain, continue to live. No, no; I have the means at hand—it is

but a plunge, and all is buried in oblivion. Farewell—farewell to all; spirit of my injured wife! plead for me at the throne of mercy for forgiveness!”

Thus wildly speaking the unfortunate man rushed from the hovel.

“Poor fellow!” said Jack, “his senses have slipped the cable to a certainty, and his mind is driven quite aback! What does he intend to do? To make a hole in the ocean to a certainty; but that must be prevented! We must never see a vessel founder. Helm’s-a-lee, messmate—brother tar—ahoy!”

Thus saying, Jack Junk, hitching up his trowsers, darted with the speed of lightning from the hut, pursuing the way which he imagined the unfortunate man to have taken, and shouting all the way at the top of his voice. Our hero was almost out-winded, and he began to fear that the object of his interest would outstrip him before he had time to prevent him. However, something obstructed the wretched man’s path, and he stumbled, and while he was recovering his feet, Jack gained upon him. But in spite of this accident, the man seemed to retain his strength in the most extraordinary manner, and resumed his flight with even increased rapidity, still waving his staff in the air, and giving utterance to the most wild and strange exclamations. He reached the rocks that bounded that part of the island, and ascending to the summit of one of the loftiest of them, he paused, and our hero had now an opportunity of coming up to him, an advantage which he did not fail to avail himself of. He also reached the rock, and ascending it, he fixed himself immediately behind the unfortunate man, by whom he was unobserved, but whom he watched with the most vigilant eye, and was ready in an instant to frustrate the fatal design which he seemed to have in contemplation.

“Majestic ocean!” he at length ejaculated, in the same wandering strain; “thou art in all your grandeur, and with the same power of destruction, which has crushed so many hopes and immolated so many innocent victims. But thou art calm now, when the poor wretch, whose life has been a curse to his fellow-creatures, comes to seek a grave beneath your billows.”

As he spoke, he was about to precipitate himself from the summit of the rock into the deep, but our hero, starting forward, seized him by the arm, and arrested his deadly purpose, at the same time exclaiming—

"Hold! wretched man! would you rush unbidden into the presence of that Almighty Judge, whose laws, to judge from what you have said, you have already so greatly broken? Forbear, forbear! and by a life of penitence earn that mercy which you would now in a moment of rashness and madness, forfeit for ever."

The unfortunate man started round at this unexpected interruption to the accomplishment of his desperate purpose, and fixed his wild eyes with an expression of astonishment and incredulity upon the face of our hero, that was perfectly indescribable.

"Ah!" he cried, "who art thou? How came you here? What devil sent you hither to obstruct a miserable wretch in the execution of his purpose? Art thou a man? mortal? Release your hold of me, or we both perish together!"

As he spoke, he grappled with the young seaman, and endeavored to force him to the extreme verge of the rock on which they were standing, but although his strength was great, even wonderful for his age, it could not compete with that of our hero, and he held him as firmly and securely as if he had been in the hands of a giant.

"Compose yourself," he said, "and allow me to lead you from this spot to your own dwelling, which I accidentally have discovered, and followed you hither."

"Who are you," interrupted the maniac, "that dare thus to dictate to me?"

"One who would do you no harm," replied our hero, "but who is the victim of misfortune, like yourself. The vessel in which I sailed was wrecked just off this island, in the fearful storm of last night, and I am the only one amongst all the crew whose life was preserved. Chance led me to your habitation, and I was induced to watch you footsteps hither."

The unfortunate man appeared to have but a faint comprehension of what the young seaman said: however, his manner evidently made a favorable impression on him, and he suffered him to lead him from the spot without saying a word. After they had proceeded a short distance, however, he suddenly paused, and looking earnestly in the face of our hero, he sighed heavily, and said—

"I have seen those features before: no—no, it must be a dream. Oh, my poor wandering brain! You are a sailor, and have been upon the remorseless and devouring ocean when the tempest raged in all its wrath; but did ever witness a young mother and her infant

offspring perish ? No, no, that horrible sight has only been reserved for few eyes, thank God ! I have not witnessed it in reality, but for many, many years, it has been vivid to my imagination. But why should I harrow up your feelings by the dreadful tale ? You are young, you look honest, generous ; you will not harm poor Herbert ? Come, come, I will take you to my palace ; yes, I am king here, and who is there to dispute my power or authority ?”

Humoring him, and glad that he had succeeded so much better than he had at first expected, he took his arm and led him from the spot, and took the way which conducted them towards his cottage.

“We will not separate again,” replied our hero, “until Providence has happily enabled me to see you to a place of safety.”

“No, no,” said Herbert quickly, “I will not quit this island again ; it is my future home, my kingdom, as it has been for many years.”

“Well, well, my friend,” replied Jack, who felt more interested every moment in the misfortunes of his hapless companion, “I will continue with you, and endeavor to soothe you in your troubles.”

“You are very good—you are very brave,” he said at length.

“You will not leave me, will you ?”

“No, no,” replied our hero. “Alas ! where can the poor shipwrecked seaman go ? Oh, Kate ! Kate ! beloved of my heart, what would be the excruciating anguish you would endure, did you but know my melancholy and hopeless situation !”

“Ah !” said the maniac, as a sudden thought seemed to flash upon his benighted brain ; “you love ! Is she to whom your heart is devoted, young, and innocent, and lovely ?”

“Ah ! she is most good and lovely,” replied our hero, with energy.

“Cherish her ! treasure her ! do not let the insidious voice of scandal prejudice your mind against her !” said the recluse. “Trust not to friends, for they are false and treacherous. Oh ! how fearfully have I experienced all this ! and you see me now what I am ! I had one who was pure, lovely and confiding, but I banished her from me with her infant, and they are both now angels in heaven !”

“Have you been long on this island ?” said Jack.

“Oh, yes,” replied the maniac, “many years. Let me see—how many ? No, no—my poor memory is gone ! But still I recollect that frightful night, when the wind howled, and the thunder roared ; the vivid lightning blazed across the sky. In vain the vessel struggled against the fury of the tempest ! One fearful, simultaneous

shriek is heard to arise from the poor wretches on board, and she sinks! I struggle with the waves! I am dashed upon the shore—and—I remember no more! Oh, yes! I do bethink me now. The next day I picked up some portions of the wreck, and some provisions, and by the most extraordinary exertions I was enabled to build this hut, where I have lived ever since, and never till you came here have I gazed on mortal being!"

"And was your wife, she to whom you have alluded, and the child, whom you loved, on board the unfortunate ship?" anxiously asked our hero.

"No, no," replied his wretched companion, with a wild look. "They had gone—perished before. I drove them from me—villain, monster that I was!"

"But how do you know that your wife and child are not still living?" inquired Jack, eagerly.

"Living!" replied the maniac impatiently. "No, no, that is impossible; do not attempt to flatter me with false hopes and delusions. They are buried beneath the ocean's billows, and this picture, which my imagination drew, represents the awful scene!"

As he thus spoke, he took from a drawer in the table a rude painting which our hero had seen him gazing at on his first entrance into the cottage, and exhibited it to him.

"It is there," he continued, in the same wild and wandering accents; "see you not how fiercely the storm rages—how the ill-fated ship is tossed about in the midst of the breakers, with no hope of rescue? And there! behold you not that female form, with the little innocent at her breast? It is they—it is they! They are constantly present to my mind's eye! Oh, God! oh, God! Kneel with me, and let us invoke the spirits of the dead!"

Our hero felt a most solemn and impressive sensation steal over him. Herbert now seemed more composed in his mind; and having kindled a fire by the same means that Robinson Crusoe is represented to have done, namely, by rubbing two pieces of peculiar wood together, he placed upon it a fish, and made other preparations for a meal with due formality and precision. This done, he motioned Jack to eat, and commenced doing so himself. The strange meal passed over in silence, and Herbert, having cleared all away, resumed his seat, and for some moments continued to gaze earnestly at Jack.

"Come hither, boy, he said at last; "you do not mind me; you will bear with me? I am but a poor old man, borne down with a weight of care and suffering. You will not leave me, will you?"

"No, no," answered our hero. "I will remain with you, and do all in my power to tranquilize your feelings."

"Thank you for that assurance," said the maniac, "you are very good; I can see it by your looks and words, and I will be very, very grateful."

Our hero continued to humor him, and during the remainder of the day Herbert was pretty tranquil. When Jack retired to rest, thoughts of Kate kept him waking for some time, and many were the prayers he offered up to heaven for her protection. Jack awoke as the day dawned, and as Herbert appeared to sleep quietly, he determined to leave the hut for a short time and ramble to the seashore.

It was a beautiful morning; not a cloud obscured the horizon, the thoughts of our hero naturally reverted to his lovely Kate, from whom he was separated by so many, many miles.

"Aas!" he sighed, "to what dangers may you not be exposed, and I not at hand to stand up in your defence! But avast, Jack! surely you are not becoming so weak as to give way to any such idle notions? Though the wild waves divide us, and your Jack is cast adrift and has lost his reckonings, he will not give up in despair. Oh, my sweet Kate: with what fond transport I look forward to the moment when we shall meet again!"

He was interrupted in the midst of his reflections by an exclamation from behind him, and turning round he beheld Herbert standing close to him. Jack presented his hand in a friendly manner, but the maniac drew back a few paces, and eyeing him with a mingled expression of reproach and sorrow, he said:—

"So you would leave me—you would desert poor old Herbert, after all the promises you have made to remain with him in his solitude. Oh, thou art false, cruel, treacherous, like the rest of mankind!"

"My good Herbert," replied our hero, persuasively, "you do me wrong; I meant not to desert you; but as the morning was fine, and you slept, I thought I would ramble forth to—"

"Sleep! sleep!" interrupted Herbert hastily. "no, no, I never sleep; oh, that I could sleep; that I could find an oblivion to my

thoughts. You say the morn is calm and lovely, but it is not so. Do you not mark how black the heavens are? Do you not hear the thunder? Do you not see the lightning's vivid flash? Hear you not the roaring waves? See you not the storm-tossed bark? Do you not hear that frantic cry for help? Will no one fly to save them? Must they perish thus? No, no—I—I alone will brave the perils of the angry deep, and will succeed or perish with them."

As the unfortunate man spoke he darted to the extreme verge of the rock, and would have precipitated himself into the deep, had not our hero grasped his arm and forcibly detained him.

"My good Herbert," remarked the young seaman, "what would you do? Come, come; this is all a wild delusion; there is nothing to disturb you thus."

"A delusion!" repeated the maniac, "does not the tempest rage, then? Do they not cry for help and succor in their terrible calamity? Do not seek to deceive me, or, old as I am, it shall cost you dear."

"No, no," replied our hero, "I would not deceive you; all is calm here as an infant's slumber. Come, let us return home."

"Home!" repeated Herbert; "yes, we have a home—a palace—and you are to be my future companion. You will not abandon me?"

"I will not," replied our hero, "but will watch over you the same as if you were my father."

"The eyes of the maniac glistened with pleasure, and pressing the hand of Jack to his lips, he said—

"Ah! now you indeed speak kind; we will be so happy together. Come, come! to our palace!"

Nearly a fortnight passed away, when, as they one afternoon walked to the rocks, our hero, casting his eyes across the ocean, uttered an exclamation of astonishment on beholding a vessel at no great distance, which had cast anchor, and at that moment a boat put off from her filled with men, and made towards the island.

"By Heaven, we are saved!" he exclaimed, grasping the arm of the maniac, and directing his attention to the vessel and the approaching boat.

The maniac uttered a wild exclamation when he beheld the vessel, and with a powerful effort released himself from the hold of our hero.

"Ah!" he cried, "a ship! They come to tear me from my dominions! but they shall not have me! I will fly and conceal myself in the bowels of the earth. Emilia—my child! ye are lost to me forever, and who shall dare again to drag me into the world? I go I fly!"

Before Jack had an opportunity to prevent him, the unfortunate Herbert had fled with the rapidity of lightning. Confused and bewildered, Jack knew not how to act; still he watched the boat with the greatest eagerness. It came nearer, and our hero shouted as loud as he could, and waved his handkerchief above his head. They beheld him, returned his salute, and then, pulling hard, made their way into a small creek, secured the boat, and ascending the rock, stood before our hero. They were ferocious-looking fellows, and such as at any other time Jack would not have felt prepossessed in favor of.

"We put in here for fresh water," said one of them; "but, hallo, messmate; how is it we find you here?"

"I was one of the crew of the unfortunate ship, the *Defiance*, which was wrecked off this island, and am the only one saved."

"The *Defiance*!" repeated the man; "let us inspect your figure-head a little more narrowly. Ah, by Neptune! messmates, 'tis he. Do you not know him? 'Tis Jack Junk!"

"Known!" cried our hero, in a tone of the utmost astonishment. "What is the meaning of this? Why do you look so triumphantly and savagely upon me? Who are ye? and what is the name of the ship to which you belong?"

"Softly, softly, my salt-water tar," said the man, with a sneer; "you will have an opportunity of overhauling our papers soon.—Secure him, and let two of you keep watch, while I and my comrades go in search of the other lubber."

"Villains!" exclaimed the seaman, struggling; "what would you do? Who are you?"

"Heed not his words; our captain will, no doubt, feel highly honored and gratified with his company."

In a moment Jack was bound hand and foot, and thrown upon the ground.

"Why is this outrage committed upon me?" demanded Jack. "What is the name of your vessel, and who is your captain?"

"Why, if it will afford you any satisfaction to know," said the

fellow, "the name of our vessel is the Black Raven, and her captain is Hugh Granfield, the daring Rover of the Seas."

"Ah!" ejaculated our hero, "in the power of that reckless monster! then, indeed, I am lost!"

Nearly half an hour elapsed, when the other pirates returned, but unaccompanied by Herbert.

"The swab has eluded us, and we have no time to waste in search of him," said one of them; "but we discovered his hut and leveled it with the ground; so the poor devil will stand a good chance of perishing. Away with this fellow to the boat; there will be a pleasant meeting between him and our captain."

Jack was carried to the boat, into which he was thrown like a dog, and the pirates rowed with all their might to the Black Raven.

CHAPTER VII.

Jack Junk on board the Pirate Vessel—The meeting of the Lovers— Their sufferings.

WE will not attempt to describe the feelings of our hero. The boat soon reached the ship, Jack was handed on board, and the men hastened to inform their captain of what had taken place. The astonishment and satisfaction of Stanford exceeded all bounds, and he ordered him to be instantly brought before him. The men obeyed, and presently returned, bringing in our hero, who started with amazement and consternation when he recognized in the pirate chief,—Mark Stanford, the supposed farmer, and his rival in the affections of Kate Markham.

"You seem surprised, my worthy Jack Junk," said the pirate, with a sneer, "and no doubt you did not expect that we should so soon meet again, and under such circumstances. I bid you welcome to the Black Raven."

"Villain!" exclaimed our hero, indignantly.

"Better language, my young spark," said the pirate; "you will recollect that here I am master, and that you are entirely at my mercy."

"Your mercy, you lubber!" repeated Jack, scornfully; "think

you I will crave for it? No. I only wish you would give me a fair chance, and if I wouldn't sink your piratical craft in less time than a man could cry *peccavi*, my name's not Jack Junk."

"Poor fellow!" said Stanford; "I can make every allowance for your excitement. Did I not tell you the time would come when you would know Mark Stanford better, and might tremble at his power."

"Why, you infernal shark!" said the young seaman, "do you not think that you deserve to be strung up to the yard-arm like a dog, as richly as any rascal that ever embellished a gibbet-post? But I defy you, you lubber! although fate has placed me in your power, Providence will protect me, and, ere long, release me from your clutches."

"I am glad to see you so sanguine," said Stanford, "for it will only render your disappointment the greater. But I have information for you that may probably serve to depress your spirits. Kate Markham —"

"And what of her?" demanded Jack.

"Why," replied the pirate, coolly, "I merely wished to inform you that she is at present in my power, and destined to become my future mistress."

"Liar!" cried Jack.

"If you have any doubts upon the subject," said the pirate, "I will soon convince you that Kate is not only in my power, but is at this very moment on board this vessel."

"On board this vessel!" repeated our hero, with a shudder of horror.

"Fool! why should you doubt my word? Mark Stanford, or Hugh Granfield the pirate, is not in the habit of making empty boasts. The beautiful Kate is in my power, and is destined to become my victim. You struck me, called me villain, and I will not fail to make you pay dearly for it."

"Mark Stanford," said our hero, "for myself I care not; do with me as you please, heap upon me any indignity, but oh, I implore your mercy for that fair and innocent girl, whom I love far dearer than my very existence! You cannot, even hardened villain as you are, dare to put your disgusting and terrible threats against her into execution!"

"Poor fool! Mark Stanford is not apt to change his mind. My decisions are always prompt and resolute. Kate Markham shall

become my victim, and no power can rescue her from the fate to which I have doomed her. Away with him, boys!"

Jack was confined in a cabin of the smallest dimensions; and when he was alone, he gave himself up to those feelings of anguish which the reader must be aware distracted his bosom. To know that his beloved Kate was in the power of the pirate chief, tortured him more than all; and it was sometime ere he could bring his mind to anything like a degree of composure.

On the day on which our hero had been seized and brought on board the pirate ship, Kate had felt her spirits more than usually depressed. It seemed to her as if something of the most extraordinary and fatal description was about to happen, and she trembled in every limb, though why she did so, she could not imagine. This feeling continued through the night. Morning came, and in a short time the cabin-door was unfastened, and Mark Stanford made his appearance.

"How fares the lovely Kate this morning?" said the villain; "by all my hopes, you look more beautiful than ever! Nay, frown not, for it is with smiles of pleasure that you should greet your fond admirer."

"Mr. Stanford," replied the indignant girl, "are you destitute of every manly feeling that you delight thus to torture me? Leave me, I beseech you."

"Pshaw, girl! what is the use of this prudish obstinacy? You are mine—irrevocably mine; and a few days shall witness the completion of my triumph."

"God forbid!" ejaculated Kate; "but I will not despair. I will put my trust in him, and he will not fail to frustrate your guilty designs."

"Well, my scornful beauty," returned the pirate, "you may entertain such hopes, but they will be doomed to disappointment; but I came here to bring you news. Your lover, Jack Junk——"

"Ah!" cried Kate, "why do you mention him? Speak!—what of him?"

"He has fallen into my hands, and is at present on board this vessel."

"Great God!" exclaimed the distracted girl, raising her hands towards heaven, "can this indeed be true?"

"I will convince you of the truth of what I say by introducing you to him," said the pirate.

"Alas!" groaned Kate, "then my misery is complete. But what is your intention towards him?"

"That depends entirely on your conduct," said the pirate. "My sweet Kate, you have it in your power to save your lover, and win my fondest and most fervent devotion. Why not yield that to persuasion which must be accomplished by force?"

"Mark Stanford," said our heroine, solemnly, "you may pride yourself upon your power, but have you no dread of the Almighty power of the Supreme, who ——"

"Bah!" interrupted the pirate, impatiently; "ought you not, by this time, to have learned that I completely scorn the power you invoke?"

Kate shuddered at these words; and it was sometime before she recovered from the emotion into which she had been thrown by the threats of the pirate.

Our hero, Jack Junk, was at the same time suffering all the martyrdom of suspense in relation to his beloved Kate.

Kate was kneeling in prayer, when she was interrupted by the opening of the cabin-door, and the next instant the unfortunate lovers were locked in each other's arms.

"Kate, my beloved—my unfortunate Kate!" cried our hero, in a voice of the deepest emotion, and pressing her beauteous form still closer to her bosom,—“and do we again meet under such circumstances? By heaven! this trial is more than I can bear.”

"My poor Jack!" sobbed the maiden; "never did I imagine that such unmerited misfortunes as these would befall us. But I care not so much for myself as for the terrible fate with which you are threatened."

"And which, you may rest assured, I will fulfil to the very letter," remarked the pirate, with a look of fierce determination. "Do you any longer doubt the power I hold in my hands?"

"For myself I care not," said our hero; "for I trust that Providence will give me fortitude to endure any outrages you may think proper to inflict upon me; but I condescend to implore your mercy for this innocept maiden, whom I love far dearer than my own existence."

"I know it," returned the pirate; "and do you think that, now I

have you both in my power, I shall abandon my designs? Oh, I will wring your heart and glory in your anguish! This beautiful girl is mine, and you shall be the daily witness of her degradation."

"Heartless scoundrel!" exclaimed our hero.

"No more!" cried Stanford, seizing Kate by the arm, and endeavoring to force her from him; "the meeting is at an end. I have indulged you too long."

Swelling with rage, Jack aimed a blow at the head of Stanford with his clenched fist, and Kate, screaming with terror, darted between them.

"Ah!" cried the pirate, fiercely, "dare you thus set me at defiance? What ho! there!"

In a minute Pierce and two or three other pirates rushed into the cabin.

"The dog has dared to strike me!" said their captain: "seize him, and place him in irons, and then await my orders."

CHAPTER VIII.

The interest Thickens—The Desperate Combat between Jack Junk and Mark Stanford.

JACK JUNK was retaken to the cabin, where he had before been confined, and his limbs loaded with fetters, so that he was hardly able to rise from his seat. In this situation he had been about an hour, when the cabin-door opened and Stanford entered. For a few moments he gazed at him with an expression of fiendish triumph, and our hero returned his gaze with a look of the utmost scorn.

"So, my gallant rival," said the pirate in accents of irony, "you are placed in the bilboes at last! Those darbies become you amazingly; I have no doubt they will cure you of some of your mad tricks."

"Cowardly villain!" returned our hero, "I scorn and despise you. It is true I am in your power, and have no means to help myself; but I do not despair that the time will come when both myself, and the innocent Kate, will be rescued, and the retribution of offended justice will descend on your head.

"Idiot!" exclaimed Stanford, "what hope is there of your being

released ? You may depend upon it that all I have promised I will perform."

"You will not dare to attempt to wrong her, Mark Stanford, or Hugh Granfield, or whatever else your name may be," said Jack. "No, I will give even you the credit of possessing too much manly feeling, to sacrifice to your guilty passions one so young and innocent. Fetter me, scourge me, torture me, in whatever way you like, but at least spare her."

"Oh, fear not," replied Stanford, "I am too gallant not to treat my future mistress with becoming gallantry. I go once more to visit the lovely Kate Markham, and to again prepare her for the fate to which I have destined her."

One night—and a dark and tempestuous looking night it was—a fierce storm arose : the sea swelled to a frightful degree, and all around threatened inevitable destruction to those who were exposed to its fury. The vessel was every now and then engulfed in a tremendous sea, and then the next instant it seemed as though she was about to be forced from that element, and to be hurled to the clouds. All was excitement and consternation on board the pirate vessel, and the oaths of the men as they hurried to their different duties, were frightful. Fiercely Mark Stanford gave his orders, whilst Pierce employed himself more coolly and actively, in different parts of the ship. Over mountain waves the ship was tossed, with more than lightning speed ; louder and louder roared the thunder ; more terrifically bellowed and howled the wind, and destruction seemed to be threatened with each rolling wave. And what were the sufferings of our heroine during this frightful season ? It would be almost impossible for any language, however powerful, to convey even the slightest idea of them.

"Great God !" she exclaimed, "look down upon us, in this our hour of extremity, and do not, I humbly beseech Thee, allow us to perish thus ! Jack ! my own beloved, faithful Jack ! may Heaven give you fortitude to support these dreadful trials, and strengthen you mind with hope. Would that we were together, that we might consult, advise, and thus derive at least some consolation ; but the Almighty's will be done." Two or three times she went to the window, and gazed out upon the storm, but its horrors were too great for her to contemplate for many moments, and she hastily withdrew, and once more sank into meditation.

Solemn, indeed, were her thoughts, but still in the midst of them all, a certain feeling of hope came over her which encouraged her on, and tranquillized her mind, when it might otherwise have been so distressed as to be past all human endurance.

During this time of excitement, the reader may imagine what the feelings of our hero were. He paced the narrow confines of his cabin, as well as his fetters would allow him; and many and agonizing were the expressions of grief to which he gave utterance. But it was not for himself that he felt the slightest emotion; he had faced death too often, in its most terrific forms, to be now appalled at its approach. No, it was for that fair and beloved being, his beautiful and beloved Kate, that all his anxieties were aroused; and when he thought of the misery of her situation, and the almost utter hopelessness of her being saved from an untimely death, he was quite unmanned, and madness almost seized upon his brain.

"This craft," he said, "good as she is—too good for the rascals who hold possession of her—can never weather such a storm as this. My eyes! it does blow big guns! There's a lurch!—more water in the hold! To the pumps! to the pumps!—she has sprung a leak, I imagine, and nothing can save her; and here am I, bound hand and foot, like a felon, unable to render you, my beloved Kate, the least assistance. Assistance! what could I do, even if my limbs were at liberty, opposed to these villains? Nothing! I shall go mad! Who's aboard? Skipper, ahoy!"

He was interrupted by hearing some one at the door of the cabin; and, a moment or two afterwards, the bolts were withdrawn, and two of the pirates presented themselves.

"How, now, you sons of the devil!" said the honest tar, "what would you?"

"Only just relieve you from these ornaments, my young sea-lion," replied one of the fellows.

"Thank you for that, at any rate," said Jack; "for these are not the ornaments with which the person of a gentleman should be decorated; so lend a hand, and mind you do your work handsomely, or, damme, if I don't put you upon six-water grog for a month!"

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed one of the ruffians; "well, I don't so much dislike you, because you seem so jolly and contented-like under all circumstances, and especially while such a storm as this is blowing."

"A storm!" replied our hero; "do you take me for a powder-monkey or a swab, that——"

"We," interrupted the pirate, "want you to work the pumps, and we shall then have an opportunity of judging of the qualities of Jack Junk, the tar for all weathers."

"Very good," returned Jack; "anything for a quiet life, my Trojan. Helm's-a-lee!—bear a hand—take these grapnels off—put me to the test, and you will find that Jack knows how to do his duty, if it be only to save the lives of such a rascally set of curs as you!"

Our hero was taken on deck and placed at the pumps, where he worked manfully, answering the taunts of Stanford in his usual independent manner.

The storm was severe—and, when it abated, Jack was conveyed back to his cabin, where, worn-out with the many hours' exertion he had undergone, but more so with the anguish of his feelings, he was left to his own reflections. We need not attempt to describe what they were, for we presume that the reader will be able to form a pretty correct idea of them; but all his anxiety was for Kate, and most agonizing were the doubts and apprehensions which took possession of his mind.

"She may even now have been degraded and brought to shame and misery," he ejaculated; "and if so, far better would it have been for both her and me had we perished in the storm. But no—I can never believe that Providence would suffer such a scoundrel as Stanford to triumph in his diabolical designs."

By degrees he became more tranquil, and endeavored to look forward to the future with hope and confidence—but that was a task not easy of accomplishment, and he paced the narrow limits of the cabin in which he was confined, in a state of considerable excitement.

Poor Kate, too, was in a torturing state of mind; and, as the rude voices of the pirates reached her ears, her agitation and alarm increased, and she dreaded every moment the re-appearance of Stanford, especially as the storm had subsided.

"Alas!" she sighed, "there is, I fear, no hope for us! Kind Heaven, I implore you to look down with pity upon us both, and to frustrate the nefarious designs of our remorseless enemy!"

But we might become tedious were we to attempt to describe all

the feelings which at that time, and under such fearful circumstances, agitated the bosom of the lovers. All prospect of their escaping from the fate which threatened them appeared to be at an end, and there was nothing left for them but to make up their minds for the worst. The pirate craft bore on her way much better than could be expected under the circumstances; and fortune, in one of her capricious moods, seemed to smile upon the villains.

The Black Raven still pursued her course, propelled by a favoring breeze, and it seemed at present as if there was every prospect of her reaching the place to which she was bound in perfect safety. Evening approached, and our hero had been for some time seated in one corner of the small cabin in which he was a prisoner, his elbows placed upon his knees, and his chin resting upon his hands, wrapped in meditation, when a sudden thought occurred to him, and he acted upon it at the moment. Starting to his feet, he went to the door of his cabin and tried it! The presentiment that had come over the young seaman's mind in so extraordinary a manner, was realized! The door was open, but how it had been left so incautiously insecure he could not imagine, and he did not take much pains to inquire.

"By all my hopes," he ejaculated, having succeeded in freeing himself from his irons, "this may turn out to be most fortunate. If I can but find the means of concealing myself in some part of this infernal craft, and securing the means of defence, I may yet, notwithstanding I am but single-handed, have an opportunity of rendering good service, and defending my beauteous Kate. Now Heaven hear an honest seaman's prayer, and aid him in his efforts in the cause of humanity and justice."

He partially opened the cabin door, and listened. All was comparatively silent, save the low murmuring and plashing of the waves, as they beat against the sides of the ship. Jack felt inspired with fresh courage, and stepped forth from the cabin crawling on his hands and knees, the better to avoid immediate detection. He had not proceeded very far, when his hands came in contact with something, and to his infinite gratification, it turned out to be a sword.

"This is most fortunate," he muttered to himself; "Providence at last seems to favor me in my designs. Now, if I have but the opportunity afforded me, let whatever may be the consequences, I will at least rid the world of such a blood-thirsty miscreant as this fellow, Mark Stanford, or Hugh Granfield."

He proceeded on his way without the least obstruction, and soon found a place where he could conceal himself, and overhear and observe most of what was passing among the pirates, without being under any apprehension of being detected himself.

In the meanwhile, Mark Stanford made his way to the cabin in which he had secured our heroine, strongly excited by drink, and his guilty mind bent upon the most brutal purposes. He unlocked

the door, and entering the cabin, found Kate seated in a melancholy attitude, and apparently immersed in deep and painful meditation; indeed, so busily were her thoughts occupied, that for a moment or two, she was not aware of his presence; but when she did become so, she started to her feet, and gazed upon him with an expression of disgust.

"Villain!" at length she said, in a voice of the greatest agitation, "why do you thus intrude upon the wretched and unoffending victim of your cruelty?"

"Kate Markham," replied the ruffian, in stern and determined accents, "this is not the time to waste in words, and you may spare your scorn and your reproaches, for they are both alike useless to you, and will have no effect upon me. This hour I have set apart for love and enjoyment—this hour I have resolved shall crown the summit of my wishes, and nothing shall move me from my purpose."

"Oh, mercy! mercy!" cried the blushing and horror-stricken damsel, sinking on her knees, "oh, think, I beseech you, of my youth and unprotected state, and if you have one spark of manly feeling remaining in your breast, you will abandon your atrocious designs; and if you still think proper to detain me a prisoner, do not consign me to a fate which is far too horrible and revolting even to think upon."

"Kate Markham," replied the hardened scoundrel, "you should know me well by this time, and should be aware that I never threaten that which I have not full determination to carry into execution. You ask for mercy, but I tell you that I have none to bestow."

As the inhuman wretch thus spoke, he hastily advanced towards his intended victim and seized her in his arms, while poor Kate was so completely terrified, that she was only enabled to offer the most weak resistance.

"Mercy! mercy!—God of Heaven, interpose and save me!" she shrieked frantically. "O spare me! spare me!"

"Your cries are useless," replied Stanford—"there is no one here to save you."

"Liar!—hell-dog!" exclaimed a stern and manly voice; "here is one that will defend that innocent girl as long as a drop of blood remains in his veins!"

The pirate captain released his hold of our heroine at this unexpected salute; and, starting round aghast and with the most indescribable astonishment, beheld standing, with his back against the cabin door, and sword in hand, Jack Junk!

He was so completely taken by surprise, that he could scarcely believe the evidence of his senses; but Kate Markham no sooner beheld her lover, than with a loud cry of joy she flew towards him, and was immediately pressed to his bosom.

"My Kate, my adored Kate," said our hero, "look up, and fear not: Providence has sent me, in the moment of imminent peril,

to your rescue, and therefore it shows plainly that God has **not** deserted us. As for you, you rascally, black-livered scoundrel, you must either be a better man than Jack Junk, or before many minutes have elapsed he will cut that ugly carcass of yours into mince-meat!"

"D——n!" exclaimed the infuriated Stanford, drawing his sword "am I betrayed? Jack Junk here? What, ho, there!"

"Avast, avast!" returned our hero, with the utmost coolness; "you may pipe all hands, if you think proper; but you see I have secured the door, which you were so kind as to leave open for my admission; and before any of your lubberly crew can come to your assistance, I will at least settle my little accounts with you. Stand back, dear Kate, and see how soon I will polish this black-whiskered gentleman off."

"Alas, Jack," said the maiden, "of what use is this resistance, unless you have friends on board?"

"At any rate, my sweet lass," replied her lover, "if I can only manage to settle the business of this fellow, there will be one devil less in the world."

"Fool!" replied Stanford, rushing desperately and determinedly towards him, "then take your choice!"

Their swords met so violently that both blades sent forth a column of sparks, and the contest commenced with the most determined bravery on both sides, Stanford all the time giving utterance to the most dreadful oaths, and shouting aloud for assistance—for it seemed not at all unlikely that the gallant young seaman would prove more than a match for him. But how great was the terror of poor Kate! She could scarcely keep herself from fainting, and awaited the result of the combat in a state of the most painful anxiety, though it was quite evident, that, let it terminate whichever way it might, unassisted as her lover was, he must be defeated; and that it was only by some miraculous interposition they could hope to be rescued from the fate which was impending o'er their heads.

"Madman!" exclaimed the infuriated Mark Stanford, "of what use is this desperate resistance, circumstanced as you are? It can but serve to bring down my most terrible vengeance on your head."

"Villain!" replied Jack, boldly, "I scorn your threats, and set you at defiance!"

The combat was now renewed with increased violence, and terrific were the strokes that were dealt on both sides; but at length the sword of our hero was broke short off at the hilt, and he was then left at the mercy of his fierce adversary.

On beholding his perilous situation, Kate Markham shrieked aloud with terror, and sank, breathless, on a seat; but her lover immediately closed with Stanford, and a desperate struggle ensued. The ~~rate~~ ^{rate}, however, ultimately proved the strongest, and, hurling the

young seaman to the floor, stood over him, with his sword pointed to his breast.

"Dog!" he cried, "I have you now; your life is still in my hands, and this moment I could wreak my most deadly vengeance in your heart's blood!"

"O mercy! mercy, Mark Stanford!" shrieked the terrified damsel, rushing towards him; "spare him, I implore you, as you hope for mercy!"

"Appeal not to him," replied Jack, "for he is insensible to every proper feeling. Kate, my beloved Kate, farewell forever; God, I trust, will protect you when I am no more!"

Stanford was about to make some reply, when the cabin-door was burst open, and Pierce and two or three of the other pirates entered.

"How now," said Pierce, "what's the meaning of all this?"

"Why, the meaning is simply this," replied Stanford; "this lubber has dared to make an attack on my life, and I have succeeded in defeating him. Bear him away and load him with the heaviest fetters, and see he has no further opportunity of playing the pranks he has just now done."

Jack, placed in heavy irons which he could with difficulty support, was enduring a state of mind which was almost sufficient to drive him to madness, and from which he in vain endeavored to obtain some relief.

It was some minutes after the departure of the villain Stanford from the cabin, ere our heroine was restored to sensibility; and after she was, for a few moments she had but a wandering recollection of what had taken place. At length the whole truth rushed upon her brain, and in a voice of the greatest agony she exclaimed:

"Ah, it was not a dream, then! I am still a wretched prisoner on board the pirate vessel, and in the power of that monster Stanford, who has threatened my destruction and that of him to whom my soul is so fondly devoted. Good God! how horrible is that thought! Would to Heaven that I had never more awoke to sense or feeling!"

At length, however, being completely exhausted with fatigue of body and anguish, she did retire to rest, hoping that a few hours' sleep might serve to revive her, and to inspire her with fresh fortitude to meet the dangers by which she was beset on every side. It was some time ere the drowsy god descended upon her eye-lids, and then her rest was feverish and broken, and her imagination was disturbed by frightful visions, which arose in rapid succession, and made her frequently start with terror and look around her, in the confusion of her thoughts, not knowing where she was. At length she awoke for good, and how long she had slept she could not form the least conjecture—but the rays of the sun were streaming full in at the cabin-window, and Margaret was sitting by the door, and was watching her attentively.

CHAPTER IX.

The Pirates' Retreat—Unexpected Appearance of Herbert.

THE sufferings of Jack Junk were unmitigated. No one visited him except the ruffian who brought him his coarse and scanty meals. His limbs ached with the weight of the fetters with which he was loaded, and (what added to his bodily anguish), he was unable to lie down or rest himself in the least degree.

Hour after hour passed away without any change taking place in the situation or feelings of our hero, and his eyes, from the windows of the cabin in which he was confined, wandered with the utmost anxiety across the deep. At length, towards the approach of evening, he was aroused from his meditations by a loud and confused noise upon deck, and he felt certain that something particular had happened. Looking more intently across the ocean, he soon discovered the cause; for he perceived land at a distance, toward which the vessel was rapidly making her way, and he had not the least doubt that there was the place of her destination. The nearer the vessel approached, the more distinct became the view our hero had of the land; and from what he could perceive, it appeared to be a small, rocky island, but easy of access. In what part of the world it was situated he could not form the least conjecture, for that was a matter of indifference to him; since, wherever it was, he felt confident the pirates had some place of security from which there was no chance of their escaping, nor any probability of their receiving any assistance from the persons who might inhabit the island.

Nearer and nearer the pirate ship approached the destined place, and at length veering round a point, they entered a rock which afforded them a ready means of casting anchor, and (being hidden from immediate observation by surrounding rocks) also of effecting an easy landing. They passed to a certain point, and the anchor was then cast; and our hero awaited the result of the termination of their voyage in a state of the greatest anxiety.

Having been placed in the boat, Jack turned one look of anguish towards the vessel, as if doubtful whether it was intended that she whom he so fondly loved was to follow, and Kate had then a distinct view of his countenance, and the anguish of her mind was increased when she saw the deep expression of despair that was stamped upon it. But it was only for a brief period that she was permitted thus to gaze; another moment and the boat put off from the vessel, and dashed on its way towards the island. The moon shone so brightly that she was enabled distinctly to watch its progress, and she did so with the deepest anxiety and intensity of feeling. It was not long in reaching the shore, and having landed, her

unfortunate lover and the pirates were quickly hidden from her view but still she remained with her eyes steadily fixed upon the spot, and in about ten minutes she observed the pirates return to the boat, and once more make their way towards the vessel, which it reached in a short time, and two of them came on board. Kate guessed full well what their errand would be, and she was not long kept in suspense. She heard the tread of hasty footsteps outside her cabin, and directly afterwards the door was thrown open, and Pierce and another of the crew appeared. Our heroine shrank back on beholding them, and could not conceal the terror she experienced ; but her emotion was too great to suffer her to speak, and Pierce advancing towards her, said in abrupt tones :—

“We have arrived at last at the place of our destination, young lady, and Jack Junk is already safely housed ; we must trouble you to follow him, for such are our captain’s orders.”

“Heaven have mercy upon me and protect me !” ejaculated the poor girl in a voice of anguish.

“Well, well,” returned the ruffian Pierce, “it is not our place to listen to such jargon as that ; all we have to do is to obey our instructions, and those are to convey you as quickly as possible after your lover, to our retreat yonder.”

On arriving on deck, our heroine cast her eyes mournfully towards the black and formidable prison to which she was about to be consigned, as its dark wall frowned like a monstrous libel upon the bright moonlight, which streamed with such effulgence upon all around, and she could not repress a deep and heartfelt sigh ; but it was not so much on her own account as that of her lover. Pierce handed her into the boat himself, and two more of the pirates followed. Having landed at the same spot where she had seen them land her lover, they turned round an abrupt angle of the rock, and Kate had then a clear view of the island, in the broad and mellow light of the moon, and also of the gloomy building to which the ruffians were conveying her, and whose dark walls seemed to frown despair upon her.

The building was situated on the summit of a lofty and apparently almost inaccessible rock, and our heroine wondered by what means they could reach it ; but she was not long kept in suspense upon this subject, for, on arriving at the foot of the rock, she beheld a small cavity, just sufficiently wide for one person to pass through at a time, and on passing through it, one of the pirates having opened a lantern which he brought with him, she perceived that they were in a spacious cavern, evidently formed by the hand of nature, and at the further end of it was a rude and lofty flight of steps, hewn out of the solid rock. Pierce and the other pirate led her towards these steps, which they began to ascend. They were winding, and seemed to conduct to the summit of the rock, and the task of ascending them was one of great fatigue. At length, however, they emerged from the rock, and stood immediately before the gloomy building.

Kate cast her eyes around her in despair, and the view which she had of the island and the surrounding ocean was of the most extensive description, and inspired her with a feeling of awe which she found it impossible to control. But very little time was allowed her to indulge in this contemplation, for Pierce, having taken a key from his pocket, applied it to the lock of a ponderous door, and traversing a dark passage they came to a narrow staircase, which seemed to lead to some places under the building. On reaching the bottom they found themselves in a subterranean passage, on each side of which were heavy doors, which seemed to open upon a series of vaults or dungeons. Having traversed the full extent of this dreary passage, they arrived at another door, the bolts of which Pierce withdrew, and they found themselves at the foot of a lofty staircase, which evidently led to the upper part of the building, and on gaining the top, and passing along a gallery, on either side of which were several doors, which seemed to open on different apartments, they turned round an angle to the left, and stopped at a door, between the chinks of which a light glimmered. Pierce unlocked it, and they entered a spacious and well-furnished apartment, in which a cheerful fire was blazing. There were two windows in the room, but they were heavily barred, giving it the aspect of a prison. Our heroine sank exhausted on a seat, where she was left by Pierce and his companions.

The next night, after the whole of the inmates of the pirate's retreat had retired to rest, a terrible tempest arose, and Mark Stanford was aroused from the deep sleep into which he had fallen, by the fury of its voice, and started from the bed in a state of excitement and confusion. He rushed to the window, and the sight which he encountered was of the most terrific description, and made even him, who had been so many years exposed to such numerous perils on sea and land, shudder. He hastily dressed himself, and had scarcely done so when he heard the voice of Pierce outside his chamber, asking for admittance:

"By the infernal host, Pierce," said Mark Stanford, when Pierce had entered the room, "this is a storm with a vengeance; there will many a vessel founder ere the morning."

"True, captain," replied Pierce, "I have seldom seen such a storm as this. I wonder how the Black Raven fares!"

"I would that I were on board of her," said Stanford, "for should any accident occur to her—Come, Pierce, we must hasten to her without delay."

"It will be impossible to reach her in such a storm as this; it would be certain death to those who should make the attempt."

"Nonsense, Pierce, have you turned coward? Think you that I can rest calmly here, knowing at the same time that our noble craft is in danger? We must rescue her at all hazards."

"Very well, captain, I am ready to obey you."

Pierce quitted the room, and, for a few minutes, Mark Stanford was left to himself. He again walked to the window, and gazed upon the furious battling of the elements, manifesting the greatest uneasiness; but he was interrupted in his meditations by the return of Pierce.

"All's ready, captain; the men are on the way towards the cliffs."

"'Tis well," returned Stanford, enveloping himself in a huge cloak; "then we will follow them, and at once remove all doubts as to the situation of the Black Raven."

Pierce followed the pirate captain, though it was evident it was with no very satisfactory feelings that he did so; and they made their way from the building, and encountered the fierce battering of the tempest.

It was a fearful night—a frightful convulsion of nature; and it was with difficulty that any person could stand up against the fury of such a storm; but the anxiety of the pirate chief for the fate of his vessel made him feel as though he could face and brave any danger. They had not proceeded any considerable distance, however, when they met two of the men who had been sent on before them, hurrying towards the Black Raven's nest, apparently in a state of considerable excitement.

"How now," demanded Stanford, "why are you hastening from the duty you were sent upon?"

"Captain," replied one of the men, "I am sorry we have such bad news for you."

"Bad news, you swab!" said Stanford, impatiently and passionately; "what do you mean?"

"Our gallant vessel—the Black Raven—which has braved so many dangers——"

"What of her?—speak! quick!"

"She has broken from her anchor, and is nowhere to be seen!"

"Liar!" exclaimed Stanford, furiously, his eyes flashing fire; "you try to mock me—to jest with me—but beware, for I will inflict such a punishment upon you for your daring, as I warrant will daunt all future attempts of the kind! My noble vessel—my Black Raven, the terror of the ocean—the cradle of so many manly and daring spirits—run adrift—lost!—'tis a monstrous lie!"

"It is as Will Danston states, unfortunately too true, captain," observed the companion of the man who had communicated the intelligence; "you have but to go to the cliffs to convince yourself."

"My vessel gone, with all the treasures and the bold hearts she contained?" cried the pirate chief, at the same time his whole frame was convulsed, and the distortion of his repulsive features, as the lightning glared upon them, was frightful to behold; "by the infernal host, it must be false! Follow me, Pierce, and if I find that those rascals have deceived me, I will invent such a punishment for them as never yet was conceived by human being!"

"Be calm, Stanford," remonstrated Pierce Raker; "for these bursts of passion cannot possibly be productive of any good. There is too much reason to apprehend, from the appearance of the night, that the statement of Will Danston and his companion is too true."

"D—n!" cried Stanford, in the same furious tones; "if it be so, the power of the pirate chief is lessened indeed! Follow me, thou birds of ill-omen; follow me, you Will Danston. Dog, do you hear what I say?"

"Dog in your teeth, bullying cur!" retorted Will Danston, boldly; "I will not follow you any longer, for I know if I do, that my pathway will be to the gallows—from which you deserved to dangle years since!"

"Ah! a mutineer!" exclaimed Stanford, drawing a pistol hastily from his belt; "by hell! I will not give you the opportunity of walking the path to which you have alluded! Die, daring knave! and——"

"Hold, captain!" interrupted Pierce. "What would you do? Destroy one of the best of our crew?" But before he could arrest the villain's arm, he had discharged the contents of the pistol in the breast of the unfortunate man, and he sank immediately a corpse upon the earth. His companion looked on with a sullen expression of horror and disgust, but he offered no observation.

"It is thus that Hugh Granfield punishes all those who dare to rebel against his authority!" said the pirate.

"'Twas a rash deed," remarked Pierce, "and may be productive of much mischief. Poor Will!"

"Bah!" cried Stanford; "are you, too, going to advocate his cause, Pierce? But why do we delay? We have everything at stake! Follow me!—and mark me, Sam Barnford: if I find that you have hoisted false signals, you shall be food for fishes in less than a quarter of an hour!"

Sam Barnford cast one look of pity at the bloody corpse of his comrade, and a feeling at that moment passed within his breast, which it was well for him his brutal captain could not read; but he made use of no observation, but followed in silence, and with a sullen, dogged step.

In a few minutes they reached the cliffs, and met the remainder of the crew who had been sent to man the boats—and all that had been stated by Will Danston and his companion was then confirmed—the pirate barque was nowhere to be seen!

To describe the scene which then followed, would be indeed an arduous task. Mark Stanford, on discovering the loss of his vessel, was perfectly frantic, and the dreadful oaths to which he gave utterance might be heard even above the hoarse voice of the tempest.

"Man the boats, cowards!" he cried; "why do ye stand idling there, when you should go in pursuit of our floating castle? Away with ye, I say! launch the long-boat, of which I shall take the command—and you, Pierce——"

"Are you mad, captain?" interrupted Pierce, boldly and determinedly; "do you not see that it is impossible, as I before told you, to brave such a sea as this?—and that it would be certain and immediate death to all who should be mad enough to attempt it?"

"You desert me, then, all of you!" cried Stanford, in the same distracted state; "away, then, you lubbers!—I will, by myself alone, brave all the terrors which you dare not encounter!"

As he thus spoke, he was madly rushing towards one of the boats, when Pierce grasped his arm firmly, and detained him from his rash purpose; and, at the same moment, Mark Stanford, the so much dreaded Rover of the Seas, overpowered by the extraordinary excitement of his feelings, sank exhausted.

"Remain here a few of you," said Pierce, addressing himself to the pirates, "and watch what takes place. Should any opportunity present itself, you will go in search of our unfortunate vessel, which I fear, disabled as she is, will never be able to weather such a storm as this. The rest follow me, and assist me in conveying the captain to our retreat."

The men nodded assent to these commands, and Mark Stanford being raised on their shoulders, was borne away, Sam Barnford following slowly behind, with the same sullen aspect and demeanor.

"Bloody miscreant!" he muttered to himself, "I exult in that which has taken place, to your discomfiture! The cold-blooded murder of poor Will Danston shall not go unrevenged at the earliest opportunity, depend upon it!"

Mark Stanford was conveyed without delay to the retreat upon the rock, and was soon restored to consciousness, but it was some time before he could regain the least composure.

The cold-blooded and heartless murder of Will Danston by the captain, caused the greatest excitement among the majority of the pirates, with whom he was a great favorite. They were filled with indignation, and held a secret consultation, at which they all swore to a man to avenge their comrade's savage death at their earliest opportunity.

The night passed away, the storm subsided, and Mark Stanford and Pierce, accompanied by two or three of the pirates, walked forth to the beach at an early hour, with the hope of discovering some traces of the Black Raven; but they were doomed to disappointment. They saw only the body of a man, which lay upon the rocks, and which Pierce directed the men to convey to their retreat.

CHAPTER X.

Extraordinary Discoveries—Who is Jack Junk?—The Downfall of the Pirate Chief—Happy Conclusion of this “strange, eventful History.”

THE man whom they discovered was indeed Herbert, the solitary, the maniac whom our hero had so strangely encountered, and in whose fate he felt so remarkable an interest. Being placed upon a couch, and all the available means applied for his restoration to life, (most of the pirates—at the head of whom was Sam Barnford—having assembled in the room, apparently out of curiosity,) Mark Stanford folded his arms across his chest, and, for a few minutes, contemplated him with the most earnest looks, whilst the expression of his features showed at once the inward emotions that were working in his breast.

“Sir Herbert Haughton!” he said, at length, in a tone of voice which showed at once that he was unconscious for the moment that there was any person but himself present: “what strange fatality is this? Did I ever, after this lapse of years, expect to behold him again?”

“Sir Herbert Haughton!” repeated Pierce; “I have heard the name before: you seem to know him, then, captain?”

“Ask me no questions!” replied Stanford, fiercely: “do I know him? yes, yes; but why should his unexpected re-appearance thus agitate me? I have him now in my power, and—Fools! why do you seek to restore him to life? Rather let my knife penetrate his heart, and thus I——”

As the villain thus spoke, he drew a dagger from his belt, and was rushing on the insensible and defenceless man, when Pierce arrested his arm, and, drawing him aside, he said—

“Hold!—what would you do? Are you going mad altogether? You know this man, and seem to have reason to fear him; but he is in your power, and that should suffice you. Ah! see, he revives!”

The unfortunate man did, indeed, recover; and, raising himself in the bed, gazed for a few moments wildly and vacantly around him.

“Where am I?” he said; “still in the midst of the storm, and about to rejoin that wife and child, whom, by the artifices of a villain—a fiend in human shape—I consigned to death? No, no!” he added, suddenly springing from the bed with much more strength than could have been expected under the circumstances, and standing erect in the room; “I am alive, and the sense of reason, so long wandering, again dawns upon me. Who are ye, that thus surround

me? Ah! do my eyes deceive me? No, no! Monster! murderer! I know you, rising as you do, like some ghastly phantom, before my eyes; and I will have retribution in your life's blood! Miscreant where is my wife?—where my innocent boy? I, Sir Herbert Haughton, whom you robbed—deceived, am here to confront you, and thus will I tear the truth from your throat!"

As he thus spoke, he sprang like a tiger upon Mark Stanford, and attempted to seize him by the throat; but the pirate was prepared for him, and hurled him violently away to the farther end of the room, at the same time he exclaimed—

"Rash fool! I acknowledge who I am—but you are in my power, and it is nothing less than madness to offer any opposition to me. Secure him, and bear him to a dungeon!"

Pierce Raker attempted to do so, but Sir Herbert struggled with him desperately, and succeeded in wresting the sword from his hand, and at the same moment he plunged it in his body—and Pierce, with a dreadful oath, fell bleeding on the floor.

"Ah!" he exclaimed, his features frightfully distorted; "by hell, I am slain!"

For a moment or so, so great was the surprise that this sudden and unexpected event had excited in the mind of Mark Stanford, that he stood completely astounded and speechless; and Sir Herbert, having left the sword in the body of Pierce, who was writhing in agony, also stood as if paralyzed to the spot, and gazed wildly around him.

"Dastards! knaves!" at length cried Stanford, fiercely; "will you see murder committed, without resenting it? Seize him, I say, or by the infernal host, I swear that every man of you shall swing like a dog, before the lapse of an hour!"

"Indeed!" returned Sam Barnford, with an ironical laugh; "but methinks you are mistaken, Master Hugh Granfield, or Mark Stanford. Comrades, remember the cold-blooded murder of poor Will Danston! Now is the time for revenge!—Seize the tyrant!"

The words had scarcely escaped his lips when the pirates rushed upon Stanford, and, disarming him, held him powerless and a prisoner; at the same time they raised a loud shout of triumph, which might have been heard all over the building.

"Have all the fiends of hell conspired against me?" cried the villain, Stanford, in a hoarse voice; "am I to be thus defeated?"

"Yes," said Pierce Raker, in a faint voice, "our career, I feel, is at an end, and I admit the justice of it."

"Ah!" exclaimed Sir Herbert, advancing towards the pirate captain, "has the moment I have so long panted for at length arrived? Do I triumph? But wretch!—monster!—where is my wife and child, whom I sacrificed through your diabolical means?"

"I triumph in my downfall!" returned Stanford, a fiendish expression of malice at the same time overspreading his repulsive features.

"Sir Herbert Haughton, the wife and child whom you so deeply lament, both met with a frightful and untimely death."

"Oh, horrible! horrible!" ejaculated the unfortunate baronet, clasping his forehead in despair; "I am justly punished for my cruelty. But not one of them spared?"

"Calm yourself, Sir Herbert," said Barnford, "and all may yet turn out better than you now anticipate. See to Pierce, comrades, and look to your prisoner—the daring and much-dreaded Rover of the Seas—Ha! ha! ha! I will return to you anon."

"May the curse of hell attend you, dog!" said Stanford. "To be thus defeated!—Oh, that my hands were at liberty, how soon would I wreak my vengeance on your head!"

"No doubt of it, most gallant captain!" replied Barnford, ironically; "but I do not intend to afford you the opportunity, depend upon it!"

Thus saying, he quitted the room, and left Pierce Raker writhing in agony, Mark Stanford furious with rage and terror, and Sir Herbert Haughton lost in wonder and confusion.

Our hero, in his dismal place of confinement, had passed many hours of the most indescribable misery, in listening to the voice of the storm, and sleep had never for a moment afforded him a respite from his sufferings, though at times a ray of hope would dawn upon his mind—why it did so, he could not imagine. He was immersed in the most gloomy thoughts, when he was aroused by hearing some one ascending the stairs, and directly afterwards the bolts were withdrawn, and the door opening, Sam Barnford appeared before him.

"Ah!" said Jack, eagerly; "what brings you here?"

"To communicate news to you that I think will afford you pleasure," replied Barnford.

"Pleasure!" repeated our hero, looking at him incredulously; "do you mock me?"

"No—indeed, I do not," replied Barnford; "I could have no interest in doing so. The Black Raven has been cast adrift in the storm; myself and my comrades have mutinied against Mark Stanford, who is now a prisoner, and you and Kate Markham are at liberty."

"At liberty!" exclaimed the young seaman, in accents of delight and astonishment; "is it possible?"

"It is true," replied Barnford; "and, moreover, I have to inform you that your companion upon the island from whence we took you, and who is known as Sir Edward Haughton, has been saved from shipwreck, and is below; no doubt you will be glad to see him."

"The unfortunate Herbert also restored!" ejaculated our hero;

"I can scarce believe the evidence of my senses; this is, indeed, most wonderful. But my beloved Kate—shall I again behold her?"

"You will," replied Barnford, "and that in a few minutes. But,

come—I will release you from these fetters, and then I will get **you** to follow me.—Methinks, Mark Stanford, I shall well have avenged the murder of Will Danston.”

It was impossible for our hero to give adequate expression to the feelings of pleasure and gratitude which animated his breast,—so sudden, so unexpected, and remarkable was the change ; in fact, it seemed to him more like a dream than a reality ; But Barnford, having removed the irons from his limbs, conducted him from the place in which he had been confined, and led him to the apartment of our heroine. But how shall we describe the meeting between the lovers ? Language must fail entirely to do it justice, and we will therefore pass hastily over it. When they had in some measure regained their composure, and all that had taken place had been explained to our heroine, they followed Barnford to the room where he had left the defeated Mark Stanford, Pierce, and Sir Herbert. The pirate captain had been bound hand and foot, and was giving utterance to the most fearful maledictions ; Pierce was still living, but in a most exhausted state ; and Sir Herbert was gazing intently upon Stanford, and so deeply wrapped in meditation, that he did not notice the entrance of Barnford and the lovers ; but Stanford no sooner beheld them than his countenance became distorted by rage, and he again gave utterance to a volley of the most frightful imprecations. This aroused Sir Herbert, and beholding our hero, with a cry of astonishment and delight, he rushed towards him, exclaiming :—

“ Ah ! do my eyes deceive me ? No ; by Heaven, 'tis the companion of my solitude—he whom I used to delight to call by the name of son ! Oh ! welcome !—welcome ! this is, indeed, a most joyous meeting ! ”

Our hero returned his greeting with equal ardor and sincerity, and it was some time before either of them could speak a word ; whilst Mark Stanford gazed on with all the deadly malice of a fiend.

“ But these features ! ” at length said Sir Herbert, gazing earnestly on the countenance of our hero ; “ there is an expression about them that goes immediately to my heart—tell me, who are you ? ”

“ A mere humble sailor, Sir Herbert,” answered Jack ; “ but, I trust, an honest man.—And this is my Kate—my beloved, innocent Kate, whom that lubber would have consigned to destruction.”

“ Yes, yes,” said Sir Herbert, impatiently, and still keeping his eyes fixed steadfastly upon our hero ; “ but your name ? your name ? ”

“ They call me Jack Junk,” answered the young seaman ; “ but I never knew my parents.”

“ No ? ” said Sir Herbert, with a look of astonishment and anxious curiosity.

“ 'Tis true,” said our hero ; “ I was found at sea—rescued from a burning vessel, supposed to be the Mary ; I was clasped to the breast of her who, I have every reason to believe, was my mother ; I was saved by him from whom I have taken my name, and another hon-

est seaman named Joe Trennant; but the vital spark had quitted that unfortunate being who bore me."

"Good God!" ejaculated Sir Herbert, with the most powerful emotion; "how wonderful is the coincidence. Can it be?—My wife and infant boy were on board the *Mary*, through the base means of that brutal miscreant; that vessel I afterwards heard was lost, and that every soul on board of her had perished. It was then that madness seized upon my brain, and I abandoned my property both in the Indies and England, and fled to the island on which you found me. Strange hopes and emotions agitate my bosom; tell me, young man, I beseech you, and as quickly as possible, how long is it since you were found in the manner you have described?"

"From what I have been informed," answered our hero, "it is now about three and twenty years ago."

"By Heaven!" exclaimed Sir Herbert, still more agitated than before; "it is the very time. Oh, my beloved, much injured, and ill-fated wife! But this suspense is insupportable; tell me, was anything found upon you by which your identity might be established?"

"Yes," answered our hero, equally agitated; "the clothes I had on at the time are still preserved, and a small silver locked was suspended from my neck."

"Have you that locket by you?" demanded Sir Herbert, breathlessly.

"I have," replied our hero, producing it; "it is here!"

"God of heaven!" exclaimed the baronet, with a burst of the most indescribable emotion, as he gazed upon it, "it is true; this is proof sufficient; you are my son, my Everard, preserved in the most miraculous way to console me in my declining days! Son! son! oh, God!"

"Father! dear Father! may I, indeed call you by that blessed, that revered name?" exclaimed our hero, and he rushed into the arms of that parent whom he never expected to behold. We must leave the scene which followed to the imagination of the reader.

"D—n!" cried the infuriated Mark Stanford, "am I to be foiled every way?"

"Yes," said Pierce, in a faint voice; "our career is at an end, and now I feel the justice of the doom which has overtaken us.—I—I am dying, and I will therefore make a clean breast of it. Kate Markham, your father met not with a natural death; he was doomed to walk the plank by Mark Stanford or Hugh Granfield, as his right name is; I murdered your uncle, and old Reuben of the Cliff, who knew all Granfield's secrets, and——"

Before he could finish the sentence, Pierce Raker, with one fearful groan of agony, expired. Kate uttered a shriek of horror, and fell insensible in the arms of her lover; and here we will drop a veil over the scene which followed.

* * * * *

We should become tedious were we to dilate upon our story ; but a few more words, and we have done. In three days after the remarkable events we have just recorded, an English vessel put in at the island for fresh water, and received the whole inmates of the pirates' haunt on board.—Mark Stanford, whose fortitude, at the certainty of the fate which awaited him, had entirely forsook him, being detained a close prisoner ; and they were soon on their way to England, which they reached in a few weeks. The meeting which took place between them and Constance, who had but recently recovered her senses, may be well imagined ; as for poor old Joe Trennant, he was in perfect ecstasies, more especially when he found that his boy—his favourite Jack Junk, had discovered his parent, and that he was the son of a wealthy baronet.

Sir Herbert Haughton had no difficulty in arranging his affairs, and he and his son, and Kate Markham and her cousin, Constance, went to reside in his splendid mansion, which was situated in the immediate neighborhood, which, from old associations, was so dear to them.

Sam Barnford and the other pirates were pardoned, but the villain, Hugh Granfield, suffered an ignominious death upon the scaffold. Nothing more was ever heard of the Black Raven, so that there could be little doubt that she perished in the storm.

In a few months our hero led his faithful Kate to the altar, and the auspicious event was celebrated with becoming magnificence. To add to the universal joy, the lover of Constance, who had been for several years detained a prisoner abroad, suddenly returned to his native place, and their sentiments having undergone no change, they were happily united, Sir Herbert bestowing a handsome marriage portion on the bride, as a reward for her numerous virtues.—Margaret was taken into the service of our heroine, and remained her faithful attendant till her death, which did not take place for many years. Our hero in a short time was promoted to the command of a vessel, and remained as he had always proved himself to be 'THE TAR FOR ALL WEATHERS!'



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